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THE WORK *of* THE PREACHER

THE WORK *of* THE PREACHER

A Study of Homiletic Principles and Methods

BY

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Formerly Professor of Homiletics, Yale University
Author of The Modern Pulpit, Representative Modern Preachers, Etc.

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PREFACE

It was only toward the end of his active service of twenty-two years (1885-1907) as teacher of Practical Theology at Yale that Dr. Brastow was persuaded to put some of the material of his lectures into books. "Representative Modern Preachers" appeared in 1904, and contained essays on nine of the most famous preachers of the recent past. "The Modern Pulpit: a Study of Homiletic Sources and Characteristics," was published in 1906. It undertakes to analyze the character and tendencies of the modern world, and in this light to understand the present ideals and achievements of various Christian communions in Germany, England, and the United States. These biographical studies and historical interpretations prepared the way for a more theoretical treatment of the principles and methods of the preacher's art. The present book was finished in 1908. A year and a half of travel, and then two years of illness delayed its publication, and it now appears as a memorial of a finished life.

The three books form indeed together a memorial fitting and worthy of this preacher and teacher of preachers. They indicate the range of his studies, the variety and freshness of his methods as a teacher, and the striking qualities of his mind. They are books which in an unusual measure embody the personality of their author; and his was a personality of unusual force and distinction. It is not granted to many men to leave in books so characteristic and adequate an expression of their spirit and of their life work. These are not books on the art of preaching only, but on the contents of the preacher's message as well. They deal with the nature of

the Christian religion, with its fitness and sufficiency for the moral and spiritual needs of our own age, and with the ways in which it can be wisely and effectively applied to those needs. To discover and develop in his pupils all the capacities, physical, mental and spiritual, that serve to make wiser and more effective such application of the Gospel to living men and to actual conditions, was the one aim of his life. For the present volume his first and final wish would be that it may help his many former pupils and others "to win men to Christ and to build them into his moral completeness."

FRANK C. PORTER.

Yale University,
May, 1914.

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I

SECTION FIRST

PRESUPPOSITIONS OF HOMILETIC SCIENCE

CHAPTER I

THE CHRISTIAN CONCEPTION OF PREACHING

HOMILETICS is that branch of practical theology which concerns itself with the science and art of preaching. As a science, or "way of knowing," it deals with the theory of preaching, or the principles on which it rests. As an art, or "way of doing," it deals with the methods by which it applies its principles. In entering upon our investigation of these principles and methods, let us at the outset note some preliminary considerations touching the character of the preacher's work, and his fitness and training for it. And in the first place a proper Christian conception of his function seems necessary.

Preaching is speech, but not all speech is preaching. It is a specific type of speech. To get at what is distinctive of it, we must look at it in its different aspects. Christian preaching has a fourfold interest, and must be contemplated in four different relations. As related to its subject matter, it has a specifically Biblical interest, or, more comprehensively, a distinctively religious and theological interest. As related to the preacher, it has an official, or representative, and at the same time a strongly personal, interest. As related to the audience, it has a liturgical and an evangelistic interest. As related to its form or method, it has an organic and a rhetorical interest. All of these elements enter into our conception of Christian preaching, for they are necessary to conserve the interests of Biblical religion, of the preacher's personality, the rights of the church, the edification and conversion of men and the laws of logic and rhetoric.

I. Christian Preaching as related to Subject Matter

Preaching is properly a function of the Christian Church, and homiletics, as its science, is, as already suggested, a branch of practical theology. From this point of view only can it be adequately conceived and defined. If it were defined as only a branch of general rhetoric, it might consistently exclude all reference to the Christian subject matter of preaching and all relation to the work of the church. But it has for its background the thought and life of the church. Every branch of Christian theology makes its contribution to the preacher's science, and to his work. Exegetical and Biblical theology take us into the original sources of the Christian preacher's message. They reveal and interpret the substance, the spirit, the aim and the method of the preaching of Jesus and of his consecrated messengers, and they furnish guidance and inspiration to the preacher in his work in every age. Exegesis and homiletics have been closely allied in every period of the history of the church. Historical theology takes us into the lives and the activities of the great preachers of the church. It makes known the great commanding truths that have held sway in different periods of Christian history, reveals the influences that, in the changes of time, have wrought upon the preacher in modifying his teaching and his method and discloses the results that have attended the proclamation of his message. Doctrinal theology interprets and formulates the great central facts and truths of redemptive religion, of which the preacher may and may well avail himself in his effort to give intellectual expression to his Christian message. And practical theology, having supreme reference to the present practical, moral and religious needs of men, forages for its material in all these realms of theological science and in all other available realms of knowledge, and adjusts the preacher's work to the conditions of thought and life of the age in which

he lives. Christian preaching thus presupposes a background of Christian truth, of Christian history and of Christian science. It is not the utterance of personal opinions based on the intelligence or on the experience of the individual preacher alone. Preaching thus based would have no authoritatively valid message and no accredited messenger. Preaching is in the true and accepted sense of the term by authority. Of course it makes its appeal to the individual and common human conscience and experience. It presupposes a moral and religious sense, without which it were fruitless. But it is precisely the content of Christian fact and truth that quickens and enlightens this moral and religious sense. Preaching, therefore, reaches far back in to the very heart of Christianity. This conditions the preacher's message. But by conditioning the content of preaching, it also conditions our conception of its nature, of its aim and largely of its form. It yields a worthy conception of what it is to preach, why we preach, and to a considerable extent it suggests how we should preach. Even the question of form is far more than an ordinary rhetorical question. If we examine the preaching of the early church, if we look, in fact, at the preaching of the most Christian type in any period, we shall see at once how it is that its Christian content conditions the aim which the preacher has in view and the form which his message takes. In the first place, it will take the form of announcement. It is the work of heralding. Christianity is the story of redemption. It is the good news of the redeeming grace of God. It is first of all a revelation of redemptive facts. The preacher's primal aim is to bear witness to the facts. Preaching is first of all a presentation of the message of grace. But it also takes the form of teaching. For the facts and associate truths of Christianity must be interpreted. Their significance, their mutual interdependence and their adaptation and adjustment to the intelligence of men must be made known. Preach-

ing is and always has been to a large extent the expounding of the inner significance of the great facts and truths of Christianity; *i. e.*, it has taken the form of teaching.

It all ultimates, however, in the form of persuasion. For promulgation and interpretation must have reference to practical results. They must aim at the production of character and the regulation of conduct. This practical enforcement of the truth is persuasion. These three elements belong to any worthy conception of Christian preaching. The mission of Christianity itself demands them. Christian preaching, therefore, may be provisionally defined as the declaration, interpretation and persuasive application of Christian facts and truths, that have been given in the religion of redemption and are Biblically fixed. The effectiveness of preaching, therefore, must depend largely upon its content. It is not altogether *how* we preach, but it is first of all *what* we preach that conditions its power. Without preaching the truth itself would indeed fail adequately to reach men. But it is this very truth that is the primal condition of the preacher's power. Without the pulpit the truth would fail. But without the truth the pulpit itself would fail.

II. Christian Preaching as related to the Preacher

Preaching has a personal and an official or quasi-official interest. The personality of the preacher includes what he is and what he represents. He is a man but he is also a churchman. He utters the truth of personal experience, but it is common truth. Preaching is a strongly personal, but not a private utterance.

1. Preaching is a representative utterance. Explicitly or implicitly, the preacher speaks for others. His message has an official or semi-official character. The function of the preacher is at once prophetic and priestly. He speaks for God and he speaks for men. As prophet, the preacher is the

mouthpiece of his Master. He brings a message. The message presupposes an accredited messenger. Note the terms that are applied to him in the New Testament. He is an Apostle,—a man sent; one commissioned to speak the word and do the work of another. He is an ambassador; one who represents a government; bears its credentials and speaks and acts for it. He is a herald; one authorized to make a public announcement. We may not over-press these terms, nor over-accentuate their official significance. But they clearly suggest a representative character in the preacher.

As prophet he represents God. The term has no adequate meaning if it be not true that he speaks for God. It is God who gives him his message and He who calls the messenger. Whether one speak as evangelist, missionary or pastor, he is a messenger and minister of Christ and holds his credentials from him. But he is also a representative of the church. As such his utterance has, in the proper sense of the term, a priestly quality. He is as really a servant of the church and speaks for it, as he is a servant of Christ and speaks for him. Many of our Protestant churches hesitate to use the word priestly as applied to the work of a Christian minister. But in so far as he ministers worthily in the name of the church and mediates the grace of which it is the depository, his function is nothing less than priestly. The Reformed churches have laid full accent upon the preacher's representative function Godward. They have held in supreme honor the prophetic function. But in minimizing the representative function churchward, they have underestimated the priestly function. In this the Lutheran and Anglican churches stand nearer the truth of the matter. Every true preacher should in some way be accredited by his church. His proclamation should not go forth as a merely private utterance. The preacher himself needs to feel that he speaks for the church, speaks for those who share with him the common Christian truth and life, as

he needs to feel that he speaks for God. The dignity and sacredness of his work are conditioned by its priestly, as well as by its prophetic quality. The church is responsible for its message. It should not allow it to fall into the hands of private individuals, who have no endorsement, explicit or implicit, official or quasi-official, from it. This representative character should be recognized in some appropriate way, as in fact it generally is recognized even in the case of the lay evangelist, at least by substantial endorsement. It fails, however, of fullest endorsement without official recognition. Doubtless Christ has commissioned many a man to bear his message, who has not received the formal credentials of the church. Undue emphasis of the preacher's dependence on and limitation by the church may involve an undervaluation of Christ's own primal commission, and may endanger the freedom and power of preaching. But the claim that the preacher speaks only for Christ and that as regards the church he speaks mostly as a private individual and without responsibility to it, would ultimate in the introduction of fanaticism and caprice and would endanger the purity of public teaching and produce schism between Christ and his church. The pastoral and official quality in preaching, therefore, needs emphasis. The distinction between preaching and prophesying is valid. Prophesying may be a true lay-function. Preaching is an official function.

2. But true preaching is an intensely personal utterance. It is the expression not only of what is mentally appropriated, but of what is cherished as a sacred moral and spiritual conviction. We sometimes satirize a man by saying that he preaches. But we pay him the compliment of recognizing the earnestness and genuineness of his advocacy. Preaching has never been, and can never be, a mere exposition of objective truth, but is a presentation of truth vitalized by personal moral and religious experience. The truth may be taught after a

fashion, without being spiritually appropriated, but it cannot be preached. "We believe and therefore speak," "We speak that we do know and testify that we have seen." Preaching is testimony now as at the first. The spirit of God works through truth as appropriated by a living soul. Apostolic preaching was a charism. For this reason the personal element was prominent. In I Cor., Chapter II, Paul gives us the apostolic conception of preaching. The two elements are knowledge and utterance. Knowledge of God's revelation is product of the working of God's spirit in the soul of the believer. "We know the things that are freely given us of God." "The spiritual man discerneth * * * judgeth all things." And this knowledge is communicated *in words* that are also product of the working of God's spirit. "Which things [*i. e.*, things freely given of God] we also speak [speak as well as know], not in words taught by man's wisdom [logic and rhetoric] but [in words] taught by the spirit, combining spiritual things with spiritual" [*i. e.*, uniting a spirit-prompted utterance with a spirit-taught knowledge]. Spirit-taught knowledge may not be combined with a merely man-taught logic and rhetoric. The meaning is clear. Experimental knowledge of God's truth, product of God's spirit working within, expresses itself in words that bear the marks of the same power that makes the truth known. The preacher's words become fit instrument for the transmission of the truth. The spirit of God is active, not only in revealing the truth to the soul but in those emotions and moral convictions and spiritual susceptibilities as well that find utterance in communicating the truth. This is the truth of verbal inspiration. It is not the inspiration that fixed the record of revelation, but the inspiration that gave power to its communication. It was not wholly the truth communicated but the mighty energy of the communication itself, that made apostolic preaching so effective. But shall we assume that this inspiration was limited to the first Chris-

tian preachers? How then shall we vindicate the prophetic quality in the preaching of our own day? How shall we justify the claim that in every age the utterance of the true preacher is a message? We need not over-press the term, but the preacher who spiritually discerns and personally appropriates the truth and who utters it with the power of a sympathetic moral conviction has the primal elements of inspiration. It was not merely the re-discovery of the saving truths of Christianity, but their fresh appropriation in Christian experience that made the preaching of the Reformation so powerful. It was the divorce of the objective truth, that was formulated in the creeds of the church, from Christian experience and the disproportionate importance that was attached to doctrinal formularies that devitalized the preaching of the post-Reformation period. It is the restoration of the subjective and personal element that gives character to the preaching of our own day. The subjective and personal element is the individualizing power in preaching. Individuality of form is one of the marks of the preaching of all the great reform preachers of the church. Preaching that is not the product of vital, interior force tends to a formal, stereotyped method. Christian oratory is the highest type of oratory, for the reason, in part, that it is a product of such reverence for and sympathy with the truth that it becomes a personal power in belief and conviction and thus imparts personal force to the utterances of the speaker. Classical oratory laid supreme accent upon the relation of the speaker to his audience; Christian oratory lays proportionate stress upon the relation of the speaker to his subject. It was enough for the classical orator that he seem to be interested in his subject, convinced of its truth and honest in its enforcement. This is of supreme importance chiefly in order that he may persuade his hearers. But the Christian orator speaks to the moral judgments and convictions of men, and he must not only seem to be moved

by the truth, he must be possessed by it and must speak what he believes. It is this note of reality, of truth in the inward parts, that has individualizing and supreme persuasive power.

III. Christian Preaching as related to the Audience

Preaching is public address, not private conference. Etymologically it suggests publicity, the presence of an assembly. It presupposes an audience. This is generally a mixed assembly. The original Christian assembly was homogeneous, and preaching was an address to this Christian assembly by one of its members on a subject of common Christian interest. This element of common Christian fellowship gave character to the address. It was a congregation of believers. The speaker was identified with his audience and voiced the common Christian feeling, faith, conviction. Hence the significance of the word "homily" (ὁμιλία) as applied to the preaching of the early Christian church. It means primarily companionship, then conference among companions, and then an address to an assembly of companions. Thus the notion of homogeneity in the audience is recognized. It is this primitive conception of Christian preaching which limits it to the work of teaching and impressing a Christian congregation, to which German homiletics has attached itself. It does not presuppose a heterogeneous audience, and it treats evangelistic preaching as an exceptional type of preaching and as demanding separate consideration. But it is impossible for us to treat the question in this manner. It ignores the miscellaneous character of the ordinary congregation. If it were admissible to assume that all our religious assemblies are composed of baptized church communicants and that all these communicants represented in full measure the realities of Christian experience, there would be no call for any type of preaching other than what may be designated as the pastoral type, whose aim is edification. But

the miscellaneous character of our congregations conditions a call for two types of preaching.

1. The nucleus of every religious assembly is a body of Christian worshippers. The audience is primarily a worshipping congregation. Preaching must recognize that fact. It should have a liturgical quality. It should regard itself as a part of public worship. It should know itself as an offering of Christian faith and should aim at the promotion of a devout spirit and at furthering the interests of the worshipping assembly. We do not separate preaching from worship as we do not separate the preacher from the liturgist or the pastor. Even in mission preaching, we recognize the element of worship. No street preacher would detach his address from song and prayer and Scripture. The effectiveness of preaching, even its rhetorical effectiveness, is conditioned largely by its association with a Christian assembly, and by the influence of Christian worship. Preaching is the better for the worship, and the worship for the preaching. In the best periods the close connection between preaching and worship, between the pulpit and the altar, has been recognized. Divorce between them has marked a degeneracy in both. Luther insisted that there should be no worship without preaching. "Where God's word is not preached, it is better neither to sing, nor pray, nor come together." Calvin laid stress upon the demand for preaching in connection with the Sacraments. These reformers recognized preaching as the centre of the worship. The value of worship was conditioned by preaching. We need to recognize the reverse as equally true. Preaching will be more simple and sympathetic, more spiritual and earnest and practical in its tone, more free and unconventional, in a word more Christian. Worship will dignify preaching and preaching will make worship more intelligent and real and substantial. In a word worship conditions devout preaching and preaching conditions intelligent worship. To make preaching and wor-

ship mutually helpful is an important homiletic problem. Something is gained at the outset, to say the least, by recognizing the fact that the liturgical interest is an important part of the homiletic problem, that preaching presupposes a Christian assembly and that it has for its object the promotion of the religious interests of that assembly.

2. But the entire audience is almost never a Christian congregation in the full evangelical sense of the word. Hence preaching should have an evangelistic as well as pastoral quality. Evangelism is a homiletic problem. To win men to the Christian life is as truly the preacher's aim as to edify them in it. It is a false conception of preaching that would limit it to the edification of a Christian congregation and would rule out evangelism as a distinct and exceptional interest, never to find place in the ordinary church service. It is based upon the erroneous conception that the congregation must always be a baptized community and that preaching is for it alone. The missionary element is essential to the complete Christian's conception of preaching. It should never be permanently divorced from pastoral preaching. Men must be won as well as built. It is the commission of the church to present the Gospel through its servants to those who have not received it into their practical lives. It is not an exceptional work to be done by an exceptional class of men. It is not necessary to divide the congregation in a formal manner. The two types of preaching play into one another. Each influences those for whom it is not primarily designed. But failure to distinguish between the two types and to recognize their distinctive objects and aims is a serious failure. Evangelistic preaching will secure warmth and cogency to pastoral preaching and pastoral preaching will condition the permanent value of evangelistic preaching. Edification supports evangelism. Evangelism gives incentive to edification.

IV. Christian Preaching as related to Form

In material, spirit and aim, as is already apparent, Christian preaching has certain distinctive qualities. And even in method or form it demands some adaptation to these distinctive qualities, just as in substance it demands adaptation to Christian thought and as in spirit and aim it demands adaptation to what is distinctive in Christian principle and character. But in its formal aspects in general, homiletics belongs to the department of rhetoric and Christian preaching is, as to its method, not substantially different from any secular oratorical product.

1. The first rhetorical element demanding consideration is structural order. The sermon is an address to be heard and remembered. It must, therefore, have an orderly development. Otherwise it would not fully satisfy the demands of public address. It would lack rhetorical impressiveness. Religious themes call for elevated, comprehensive and orderly discussion. Unity of impression is dependent upon coherent exposition. Fragmentary and desultory discourse fails to meet the needs of our time and is unworthy of the great themes of religion. It is inadequate to the needs both of preacher and hearer. It is of course to be conceded that the preaching of the early church was artless, and yet it moved men. The discourse was delivered for the most part to small congregations within a limited area and was a free, spontaneous, unartistic utterance. It was like a prayer meeting address or a Bible reading. Possibly there were more elaborate addresses. The tendency was increasingly in the direction of such addresses. It is probable that the discourses commemorative of the martyrs, of which unfortunately we have no adequate record or illustration, promoted this tendency. But the discourses recorded in the New Testament, although probably inadequate to illustrate worthily apostolic preaching, are without rhetorical order. They did their work doubtless and met

the needs of the time. But they are not models for a later age. Homiletics was an undeveloped science. In the changed relation of Christianity and of the church to the world at large, a better method was demanded. Patristic preaching was less unelaborate than apostolic preaching. Cyprian and Tertullian were orators. Origin marks another modification, Augustine and Chrysostom still another, all in the direction of a more orderly method. Without these changes preaching would not have done its work. Nor without orderly method will it do its work today. We are heirs to it. We are in reaction, it is true, against the stately elaborateness of our homiletic ancestors, and greater simplicity of method is advocated. But simplicity is not incoherence. An effective pulpit demands something more than the homily. The mind is not at home in chaos. The heart as well as the mind craves an orderly world. Truth goes home along the lines of law. Orderly method is more than a rhetorical interest. True rhetorical interests subserve religious interests. There never was a time when effective preaching was in greater demand than now. There is as good a field as ever for the true preacher, and a rational method is one of the most important problems. No man can ignore the laws of the human soul and make his speech effective.

2. Literary form is another rhetorical element in preaching. Preaching is not lecturing. The lecturer may use the language of science. The preacher uses the language of life. Preaching is for the average mind, not for the exceptionally trained mind; not for scholars, nor yet for children. It avoids the extreme of intellectual elaborateness on the one side and of intellectual condescension on the other. A preacher must reach his audience. It is his calling to do it. He can not do it without interpreting abstract thought in concrete form. Popular preaching is not vulgar preaching. There is a true and a false popular style. The preacher is an educator. He

should respect the higher and the permanent interests of men. But within the limits of Christian propriety the pulpit should adjust itself to the capacity of the average man. The sermon is not a treatise, nor a lecture nor an essay, nor a prose poem. From all these it differs in its aim and so in its form. The ethical aim of the sermon forbids that it come in the language of the understanding wholly, that is, in a purely didactic form as the treatise or the lecture may, or in the structureless form of the essay or in the language of subjective emotion or sentiment or fancy as the poem does. It combines the language of the understanding, of the emotions and of the imagination. This is the popular style, combining dignity, cogency and grace. Thus the sermon must be our ideal in the discussion of homiletic problems. The ideal of the lecture with its didactic substance addressed to the understanding, with its logical method and unemotional style whose chief mark is intellectual clearness, is inadequate. Inadequate is the ideal of the homily with its scriptural material, its structureless method, its free and unconventional style, whose mark is simplicity, speaking at once to the mind and the heart. Inadequate the hortation, with its emotional fervor, rapid movement and its concrete style. Inadequate the essay with its freedom and remote relatedness of thought, or the poem with its language of the imagination. But the sermon may incorporate elements that are common to them all.

To recapitulate, the best type of preaching combines the Biblical, the representative, the personal, the liturgical, the evangelistic, the structural and the literary interest. Undervalue the Biblical element and preaching will deteriorate. It will lose vitality. It will fail in religious aim and the religious interests of men will suffer. Undervalue the representative element and it will become capricious and irresponsible. Undervalue the personal element and it will lack in power of conviction and persuasion. Undervalue the liturgical element

and it will fail to impress and edify the spiritual life. Undervalue the evangelistic element and it will lack in directness and cogency. Undervalue the structural quality and it will fail in cumulative impression. Undervalue the popular elements of literary style and it will fail in concreteness and force. Combine these interests and we get the best results of pulpit speech.

CHAPTER II

THE AIM OF CHRISTIAN PREACHING

THE question of aim will constantly occur in our discussion of homiletic problems. It is one of the most important questions with which the preacher must concern himself. Many qualities of good preaching are dependent upon it. The tone of a preacher and to a large extent his method are determined by his aim. And if the subject matter of one's preaching conditions the aim, it is equally true that the aim will be influential in the choice of material. How can one know what to preach without an adequate conception of the general and the specific object of his preaching and without a worthy purpose with respect to his object? It is this practical significance of the question that sanctions a preliminary discussion of its importance.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF HOMILETIC AIM

1. The ethical significance of preaching suggests it. Preaching is a moral act. Something is to be accomplished. An impression is to be made. A result is to be achieved. Someone calls it a "word-act." Vinet calls it a "combat." Theremin calls it a "virtue." Without aim this ethical significance is ignored. The theory that preaching is merely the expression of a religious experience that is common to preacher and hearer, and that it may be left to take care of itself without any conscious aim in the preacher other than that of giving expression to the realities of his own inner life, is inadequate and misleading. The best type of preaching is conscious of its object. It purposes to make an impression

and knows the impression it seeks. The preacher is bound to make himself effective. The study of his art is largely a study of his aim, and this is more than a matter of professional pride, it is a matter of moral moment. This ethical or impressional element gives preaching its distinctive place in the conduct of public worship. No other part of the public religious service is so conscious of its aim. Neither song nor prayer can be, or should be, so conscious of the impression it would make. It is true that every act of public worship may be measurably impressive in intent, otherwise it were not a proper object of criticism. But preaching seeks impression as no other liturgical act does. It is bent on bringing something to pass. It is indeed a contest with man. Into no other service do we put so strong an ethical purpose. It is confessedly easily possible to overdo it. But it may also be underdone. *Aim* then is one of the primal elements in all effective preaching. An aim at once broad and definite. Make the aim too broad and preaching will lack definiteness and directness. Make it too definite and it will lack scope. It will be narrow and may be superficial. It should be broad enough to be educative, and definite enough to be immediate and impressive; broad enough to cover all types of preaching, all the complex moral and religious interests of the community, the church and the congregation, and all varieties of ability in the preacher, and definite enough to be true to any specific type of preaching, to hit the specific needs of the community, the church or the congregation or of any particular class in the congregation, or possibly of a single person at a particular time, or to meet the demands of a particular truth or the needs of the preacher's own personality at any particular time. Breadth and range are essential to an educative pulpit. It will cover the complex needs of the community and the complex interests of truth. A non-educative pulpit will fail of its vocation. Reversely, definiteness is essential to immediate moral and religious re-

sults. Breadth and definiteness, comprehensiveness and intensity find expression in corresponding types of preaching, the pastoral and the evangelistic types, and meet a double need. Pastoral preaching is comprehensive and educative. Evangelistic preaching is definite and intense. A proper blending of the two will secure range and vigor. It is not impossible measurably at least to harmonize the two qualities. Pastoral preaching may lack definiteness and fervor. Evangelistic preaching may lack in scope. It may be narrow. When each influences the other, the pastoral sermon will be the more vigorous in its directness, will squarely hit its mark because it has a mark to hit, and the evangelistic sermon will find a good background of solid Christian thought and a good foreground of comprehensive, educative aim. It will have its setting in a broader thought and purpose that will carry it beyond the immediate impression and at the same time will not fail of such impression. It is the ethical quality in preaching that accentuates the need of such combination.

2. The rights of the congregation tax the preacher's purpose. The congregation is entitled to his respect. Its presence involves certain legitimate expectations. No man respects its rights who preaches aimlessly. Nor can such a man win its respect. A public speaker, and especially a Christian preacher, can not safely ignore legitimate expectations. He speaks to intelligent moral beings. As such they have claims on him. A preacher should remember that he is a debtor to his audience. Responsibilities are of course reciprocal. For the audience is also a Christian congregation. But for the preacher that congregation is an audience. The congregation invites the minister to lead it in its worship. But the preacher invites the congregation to become an audience and to listen to him. He who does this should do it with a purpose. He should give them what it is important for them to hear and should show that, so far as depends on him, they shall hear

and shall have the avail of it. He who preaches, preaches at something. A sermon that is good is good for something. There is no good that is good for nothing. An audience should never be over-taxed or disappointed in its confidence in the strength of a preacher's moral purpose. The hearer is entitled to know what the preacher means, what he is "driving at." It is claimed that the preaching of our day lacks aim. The truth of the charge may be questioned. There may be a lack of certain aims, but this does not prove it to be aimless. This charge is generally made by two classes of critics. They are both onesided in their estimate. The professional evangelist or revivalist criticises the preaching that does not aim in every sermon at immediate evangelistic results. For such preaching "the art of winning souls is a lost art." It is sufficient to reply that the evangelistic type of preaching is not broad enough to cover the entire field. It is doubtless true that there is a lack of evangelistic aim in even the best of our modern preaching. But there are other types of preaching and other aims than the evangelistic, and what the evangelistic field has lost the ethical field has won. The church dogmatist on the other hand criticises the preaching that lacks the dogmatic or doctrinal note. But preaching is not aimless just because it fails to be apologetic of a particular type of theology. It is not the proper aim of preaching to prop or fortify any school of theology. Doctrine is an instrument, not an end. The man who works his truth and makes it available does not lack aim. But it is certainly true that in so far as the preacher of our day fails in any important aim or lacks in strength of moral purpose, he fails in respect for the truth and for his fellowmen.

3. Exposure to detrimental influences that endanger the preacher's moral earnestness is a summons to renewal of moral purpose. The ethical quality of preaching is always threatened. Compromising influences are always at work. They

vary with different periods, but are always a temptation to moral weakness. We find them in our day. They should put the preacher upon his guard.

The influence of secularism threatens the moral fibre of the preaching of our day. Commercialism, of which we hear so much, is a dominating power that has crept into the church. The pulpit of a church that is commercialized is easily secularized. In nothing is the secular tendency so readily manifest as in the preacher's lack of moral purpose. No moral purpose in the preacher means the presence, even though unconscious or half-conscious, of an unworthy secularized purpose. The agnostic spirit endangers the moral power of the preacher. Preaching presupposes a positive basis. It deals with ascertained results. It is not tentative or speculative or uncertain, because it rests upon experimental truth. But the preacher who lives in a realm of uncertainty, who is always rationalizing, always speculating and never reaching positive results, will preach vaguely and aimlessly. There will always be a lack of positiveness and definiteness about his work. A dominating literary spirit endangers the moral purpose of the preacher. The literary interest may compromise the ethical interest. The sermon may become an end. Any man who is more solicitous about the literary or artistic quality of the sermon than about its practical moral effectiveness will preach without a worthy moral aim. Preaching is indeed an art. But it is more. It is a moral achievement. Art is subordinate to aim. Or rather, aim is tributary to art. Moral purpose is one of the most important considerations in the true artistic character of a moral and religious address. The poet may speak for the love of speaking, or for the love of artistic expression, or with supreme reference to æsthetic impression. But the preacher must aim at a moral result. And this aim is in fact necessary to his art.

4. Practical results accentuate the importance of moral

aim in preaching. Strength of ethical purpose discloses itself in such results, results in the preacher and in his work. The effect on his personal and official manhood is manifest. The whole tone of the man with respect to his preaching in general and with respect to the individual sermon is affected. Such a man is not in the pulpit as by dire necessity, but because he has something to do there, and is "straitened until it be accomplished." He will bear himself as one who means to have a hearing. Modestly of course, but in downright manly fashion. One's moral purpose affects the whole tone of his manhood. It purifies, enriches and greatens his whole life. Such a man can be neither a conceited pedant nor a fawning sycophant, but a straight-forward manly man.

The effect on one's work will be equally notable. It will condition the range of one's preaching. It will rule out all matter and all method that are inharmonious with the highest Christian conception of preaching. Moral purpose is an important factor in good rhetoric and oratory. The element of will in public speech might well receive more attention than it has received. A strong, steadfast, immanent purpose will lift the tone of a man's entire inner life, mental and emotional, and he will be the more effective as a public speaker, if he have the gift of public speech at all. The words of Phillips Brooks* touching the demand for cheerfulness, hopefulness, earnestness and reality in the preacher are golden words. It is precisely this strong ethical purpose that is associated with these qualities. It will influence his method. The preaching of such a man starts with the conviction and assumption that it is "worth just what it effects." Such a preacher is interested in his work not speculatively, but practically; not as related supremely to thought but to life. The man who holds the theory that he has no responsibility with respect to the results of his

*Yale Lectures on Preaching. Chap. VIII. "The Value of the Human Soul."

preaching, who simply says his say and lets come of it what will, will preach aimlessly. Such a man can never fully answer the question, "Why do I preach?" The truth is not an end but an instrument. This conviction will influence a man in his method of handling his material. It will not be a performance in mental gymnastics. It will be full of warmth and energy and will shape itself into good, effective rhetorical and oratorical form. It will be a vigorous instrument for the enforcement of the truth.

II. The Central and Inclusive Homiletic Aim

Preaching is only one of the many methods of applying Christianity to the needs of men and as to its object it does not differ substantially from other agencies. They all have the same general object. Comprehensively stated the aim of the preacher is the rescue and reconstruction of manhood. It assumes that men need to be delivered from the dominating lower life of the flesh, to be rescued to the higher life of the spirit, and to be shaped into a spiritual manhood. Concretely stated it is to win men to Christ, and to build them into his moral completeness.

1. Note here a recognition of the individual and social factors in the work. The rescue and reconstruction are not wholly of individual men in their isolation from their fellows, but of men in their associate life. It is the building in and the building up of men into the body of Christ. We can not stop short of this in our statement, and we cannot get beyond it. Redemption as a work of rescue and of rebuilding must recognize these two factors, which after all are practically one. The preacher's object can not be the recovery and edification of a few elect individual men. No man ever finds completeness in himself. The aim of preaching is ultimately the completion of the body of Christ, or the completion of the kingdom of God, or the completion of humanity. We come to the perfect

man, to the perfect stature in Christ, only in our associate life. Men must be won to a common life and built up together in it. "And He gave some to be apostles, and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ, till we all attain unto the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." *

2. Note here once more also a recognition of the two actually existing classes in the congregation, *i. e.*, those to be won and those already won who are to be educated and trained. The existence of these two classes creates corresponding demands upon the preacher. We can not deny their existence, and we can not ignore their claims. The preacher should know with whom he deals, and should shape his preaching with reference to actual needs, otherwise he will preach aimlessly. The ordinary congregation is not composed wholly of baptized persons, or of those who by virtue of their baptism are assumed to be Christians in the high and worthy sense, and who, therefore, need only nurture and training. The object of such preaching could only be to conserve and develop this assumed already existing Christian life. Its object would be edification in the restricted sense. This false assumption and the object based upon it would be false to the facts and inadequate to the needs of the congregation. It would substitute a part for the whole complex aim of preaching. Such preaching might easily become formal and perfunctory. It would not deal with living men as they actually are before the preacher, and it would become unfruitful. There is no building up without building in. But of course preaching should not be prevailingly hortatory. We exhort men that they may be persuaded. But after persuasion—what? The evangelistic

*Eph. 4: 12, 13.

type of preaching can never be final. It would defeat its own aim and prove fruitless in the end. "Winning souls" in the narrow and sometimes unreal sense can never be ultimate. The soul is not saved in the full Christian sense till it is developed and trained into the completeness possible for it.

3. Note further that this comprehensive conception of the object of Christian preaching finds place for all the elements involved in the complete conception of Christian preaching itself. Augustine, following substantially the classical rhetoricians and orators, thus comprehensively states the object of Christian preaching; "The Christian orator ought to teach, to please, to persuade; to teach so as to instruct, to please so as to hold, to persuade so as to overcome. Teaching for the purpose of instruction secures intelligent hearing; pleasing for the purpose of holding secures free listening; persuading for the purpose of overcoming secures the obedient mind, heart, conscience, will." No better statement of the aim and characteristics of true Christian preaching could be made. The obedient mind, heart, conscience, will—this is the ultimate aim. To bring the whole man under the sway of the truth, through the forces of personality and of truth that play through human speech. All the elements of effective speech are necessary to secure this result. The adjustment of these elements, with which Augustine undertook to deal, in order to achieve the result, is a rhetorical question with which we need not now concern ourselves. Just here it is pertinent simply to suggest that these elements ultimately resolve themselves into the didactic and persuasive elements of speech, and, as we shall see, they are both necessary to the work of rescuing and building men. To teach, to impress, to persuade men by the power of the truth and of personality, the organ of truth, thus to bring the whole manhood, mind, heart, conscience, will, under the sway of truth and of the spirit of truth,—this is to rescue

men and to build them into Christian manhood. This is redemption. And this is the end of the preacher's work.

4. Note finally that we have here an adequate recognition of the full significance of edification as the object of the preacher's work. This notion of building is a New Testament conception and is used somewhat variously. Let us look at it in its relation to the work of preaching in its comprehensive significance, following somewhat closely the natural and etymological suggestiveness of the word. The first thing suggested is an ideal to be realized. Building presupposes a plan, a pattern, an ideal. Culture in its highest conception is the building of manhood after a pattern. Christian culture presupposes a Christian ideal, a Christian pattern, after which the work proceeds. With this ideal the preacher deals. It is his task to exalt, to advocate and to apply this ideal. For the individual man this ideal, this pattern, this standard is the perfection of Christ. Preaching is the advocacy, and its aim the production of a Christian manhood after the type of Christ. For the community of individuals, for the church, for humanity collectively, the ideal is the kingdom of God. The final purpose of the church is the realization of the ideal of a divine society; *i. e.*, the building together of humanity into a social organism, after the pattern of a heavenly society. The ultimate object of Christian preaching, therefore, is the spiritual unity,—completeness and effectiveness of the church or of the kingdom of God, which the church represents.

The second factor in this conception is the winning of the material to be built. The material to be built is men. They must be won before they can be built. They may be won gradually, and unconsciously to themselves. But somehow they must be won. They must be illumined, awakened, changed in their moral dispositions, in a word won to Christ, before they can be started aright and before they can be developed and trained into moral and spiritual manhood, or be-

fore the processes of moral and spiritual development can go most successfully on. The process of edification, therefore, in so far as it involves the winning of material, the right starting point, the right foundation of the spiritual structure, includes all that is contained in the terms conversion and regeneration as the initial point. This lifting of manhood out of dominance to the lower life of the flesh, this modification of the moral and spiritual manhood, which is called the new birth, is the proper ground for edification into the manhood of Christ. What has been called the process of sanctification is only the process of continued growth into the completeness of moral and spiritual manhood, which rests upon the foundation of a moral charge. Preaching is, of course, only one of the agencies through which the start is made. It takes a great many moral agencies to renew men. But the work of the preacher is prominent. It deals with all those truths, those principles, those impulses and incentives that start character aright.

A third factor is the process by which the building work goes on from its starting-point and by which the ideal is ultimately realized. It is a process of development in symmetrical upreach and outreach of Christian character till the full pattern is realized. Again preaching is only one of the agencies in the process, but it contributes much to the development of such height and range and symmetry of Christian character as brings manhood to its ultimate goal. It deals therefore, as already indicated, with the whole man, mind, conscience, heart, will. Men grow strongly, broadly, symmetrically only as religion touches the mental, moral and spiritual manhood. The process includes also the growth of the whole body of Christ into the unity and completeness of organized life.

But the final factor is the instruments or agencies employed in the building work. There are many agencies but they in-

clude various types of preaching. Edification as the aim of preaching in the broader sense accentuates the demand for comprehensiveness in the work and so rescues it from a narrow provincialism and one-sidedness. Two instruments especially are employed in the work of preaching. They are—to use Phillips Brooks' terms—truth and personality. In other words the agencies or methods of preaching employed are teaching and persuasion. And this brings us back once more from another point of departure to the two chief factors in preaching, to which reference has already been made. Let us consider them a little more fully.

The work of building character presupposes a didactic foundation. Foundations must be solid. We build character on solid truth. Preaching presupposes the interpreting of truth to the mind and conscience. At the outset edification is not other than education. The truth that builds up Christian character must be Christian truth. Growth into the likeness of Christ is the product of preaching Christ. Such preaching deals with the person, the teaching, the work of Christ. Christ the source, the inspiration, the pattern and the aim of all Christian life. The entire message of the Gospel is summed up in Christ. Christ only can build into Christ-likeness. The personality of Christ and his message must be interpreted. The preacher is fundamentally an interpreter, an interpreter of God, of man, of life, of Providence, of history in the light of revelation, and of all human life in the light of redemption. But above all he is the interpreter of Jesus Christ. He is primarily a prophet, not a priest. Christ's preaching was largely teaching—the interpretation of spiritual realities. So was apostolic preaching. Paul was pre-eminently a teacher of religion. The prominence of the element of truth and of teaching in the work of preaching accentuates the need of an intelligent building of character. It is claimed that Christianity is the only religion that has

been or can be successfully taught, and that, therefore, it is the only successful character-building religion. It appeals to human intelligence. Men were impressed with the words of wisdom that fell from the lips of Jesus. Solid character must have an intelligent foundation. Paul discredited an over-emotional type of preaching, and gave preference to the word of instruction on the ground that it edifies character. His bishop must be "didaktikos"—"apt to teach." He who aims at the production of an intelligent religious life in his preaching will appeal to the intelligence of men. This is the condition of permanent success. Intelligent conviction is the basis of solid character. Perversities of understanding abound in our day. Men are precommitted in wrong mental judgments as well as in wrong moral bias, and all this renders the preacher's task the harder. It is sometimes said that men know the truth better than they obey it. This is measurably true. But the fact is that there is a vast amount of wrong headedness, even among Christian people, as well as wrong heartedness. But what sort of truth is edifying truth? Not all truth is edifying, simply because it is truth. Not all preachers have learned this. The impracticable preacher, who is always the unedifying preacher, is the one who fails to adjust his truth to the condition of his hearers. There must be a certain correspondence between the truth presented and the state of the hearer, just as there must be a correspondence between the material that goes into a building and the character and design of the building. Men are edified when the truth presented is fitted to their needs. The matter of a discourse may be true and its presentation good, but it must find the hearer, it must come home to him, or he is not edified. The homespeaking truth is the truth that meets a real need.

The work of edification presupposes an influence upon the heart and will as well as upon the mind. Teaching presupposes the power of truth. Persuasion presupposes the power

of personality. Preaching includes not only the instrumentality of truth but the effort of a living man. Truth and life. There is no edification without persuasion. Men are neither won nor built, neither built in nor built up without speech that goes out of the intellectual into the emotional, affectional and volitional parts of a man. That is not preaching that ends in an appeal to the mind only. "We persuade men," persuade as well as teach. The building is of human character. Growth presupposes life. It presupposes the impelling energy of a soul moved to its depths, if it will move other souls. Here too, the principle of correspondence is necessary. There must be a certain common ground between the speaker and the hearer, as well as harmony between the quality of truth and the needs of the hearer. We are not edified by what is strange and foreign. A sort of Christian mind must be created before edification is possible. Men must become measurably familiar with the truths and facts of Christianity before they do their best work. The home truths are not the strange and unfamiliar truths. The old truths intelligently and freshly interpreted edify. And the old truths come home to us in the language of common life, language that is familiar in its imagery and its terminology. Men are not edified by a strange and to them barbarous speech. To produce a state of mind in the hearer corresponding to the preacher's state of mind, the forces of his personality must find a language instrument fit to translate and to transmit these forces and so to impart themselves that they will awaken what is correspondent in the soul of the hearer. It is this element of persuasion that marks the distinction between teaching and preaching. Teaching is a factor in preaching, but it is not the only one. We teach that men may know. We preach that they be and do. In teaching the ethical factor is indirect and remote. In preaching it is direct and immediate. The sermon is not for itself, not for its theology, not

for the intelligence and culture of its hearers, but for the production of character and the regulation of conduct. The best didactic preaching, therefore, which aims at edification will be persuasive. Just here is the unique power of the pulpit. The press can teach. But it is only the living man that can preach. When teaching is vitalized by the power of an earnest sympathetic human soul, it becomes persuasive, and may be well nigh irresistible. It is the truth that is borne along the currents of human feeling that subdues the souls of men. It must be presented with a tone of cheerfulness and hopefulness. The great hopes of the Gospel rally the preacher to a contagious enthusiasm. Its lofty tone of authority summons him also to a tone of moral certitude answering to it. Preaching is not persuasive in proportion as it lacks moral conviction and purpose. It appeals with assurance to the human conscience and heart and will. The persuasive preacher is a modest and devout man, but he does not potter with uncertainties, nor give away his case. He speaks with the authority of positive conviction. Christianity can not be persuasively presented if the preacher allows himself or his message to be patronized by the high and mighty democratic and agnostic twentieth century.

CHAPTER III

THE GIFTS OF THE PREACHER

THERE are certain qualities in every preacher, certain gifts, on which the success of his work depends. They are gifts of nature and of grace, developed by assiduous culture. The man who undertakes to preach must have some of them or he is no preacher. But an ideal combination of these gifts has of course never been realized. There is no ideal preacher, never has been and never will be. Indeed it is difficult, if not impossible, to conceive the ideally-gifted preacher. There are many conceivable ideals. To combine them all into one supreme type, and to conceive of them as realized in any one man is an impracticable, not to say an impossible mental task. The best preachers represent different types. They suggest typical ideals, correspondent, but they hardly suggest the possibility, even ideally of combining them all into one supreme type. No one man has ever combined all the gifts of the great preacher. Augustine must have combined many of them in generous measure. Tertullian, Cyprian, Chrysostom and the Cappadocians in larger measure. The classic preachers of the Gallic Church, Bossuet, Bourdaloue, Massillon and Saurin among the Protestants, Luther among the Germans, and among the moderns, Robertson and Beecher—all these were great preachers. But how varied and how different their gifts, so varied and so different that their points of contrast are quite as striking as their points of likeness. But it is not necessary that one possess the gifts of these great masters, either in degree or in type of combination, in order to be a respectable preacher. It is

not necessary to be a great preacher in order to be a preacher at all. The work of the church is done and well done by ordinary men. It is only the elect few that possess many and great gifts for preaching and in well-balanced combination. The larger number have but few and meagre gifts, and yet they are not without success in teaching and persuading men. Our task at present is the consideration of some of those qualities that are highly important for any preacher and that may be cultivated.

I. Classification of Gifts

1. Mental gifts. The preacher, as we have seen, is an interpreter. It is his task to make intelligible and to vindicate the rationality and moral value of what he proclaims to be the truth. The interpreter must succeed in interpreting. He must have the requisite mental gifts for his task. Many and varied intellectual gifts are desirable in a preacher. But there is a certain group of qualities that is of preëminent importance. That the preacher should be a dialectician as well as a rhetorician was Luther's estimate of his requisite intellectual equipment. Luther meant that he should combine power to think discriminatingly, connectedly and fundamentally with power to express his thought in effective popular speech. As a rational thinker he must speak convincingly to the mind and as an effective orator he must speak persuasively to the emotions and will. Mental discrimination, mental coherence, and mental range should be combined with vivid imagination, fervid emotion and practical tact. This answers to the two chief demands of the audience that the preacher do justice to the subject and to the object of the discussion. The dialectician will do justice to his subject. The rhetorician will do justice to his object. The one will convince by a thorough grasp and handling of his theme, the other will persuade by a complete identification of himself

with his audience and by an effective style of address. We are dealing now with those mental gifts that are requisite for the presentation of the subject. Of course we need not insist upon using Luther's term dialectician, nor undertake to vindicate the claim that it should stand for all that Luther would have put into it. The scholastic dialectician does not get a hearing in our day. But let us put our own meaning into the term. Dialectic gifts may stand for mental discrimination, mental coherence, and mental range, for the requisite sharpness of mind to distinguish the elements of thought in a subject, for the requisite logical power to relate the thought of the subject and for the requisite power to grasp the principles of the subject fundamentally. It is certainly desirable that the preacher have these mental qualities and that he cultivate them assiduously. Let us consider them for a moment. Mental discrimination. The preacher has to make himself intelligible to the average audience. Whatever, therefore, the quality of his thought, it must be clear and discriminating. It may be subtle or it may be obvious and near at hand, it may be ingenious or it may be commonplace, it may be suggestive or it may be exhaustive, it may be penetrating or it may be discursive, it may be intuitive or it may be argumentative, it may be imaginative or it may be philosophical—whatever the quality of the thought it should have the element of clarity in an eminent degree. No man can vindicate his vocation to interpret Christian truth to human intelligence, if he cannot make himself intelligible. The prophet must succeed in getting his message out without obfuscating his hearers. He must speak straight. His function as messenger and the character of his message demand it. A foggy preacher is not a preacher. What a man is summoned to make clear should not be muddled. The truths of religion are important and they are not easy to handle. The preacher owes it to his audience, to his subject,

to his vocation and to himself that he train himself in habits of clear, discriminating thinking to the utmost of his power. Without such thinking no audience can be permanently, and in the highest degree, profited. Especially if a preacher has anything that he regards as new to present, and which his hearers should clearly understand, is he beholden to them to clear it up or let some one else undertake it, or wait until he is able at least to speak intelligently. It is unfortunate that much of what calls itself "new theology" is unintelligible, even to those who are not inhospitable to it. If this quality of unintelligibleness were inherent in the theology itself it would discredit it. But if it is in its advocacy, it discredits the preacher. Any new theological movement in the churches is a summons to the preacher to exceptionally clear thinking and clear speaking. The members of our churches have a right to know what a preacher is "driving at." We do not think of John Calvin as a great preacher. He was not an orator. Nor was he a rhetorician. He met only a single aspect of Luther's conception of a preacher. But he met that with conspicuous success. It was not merely that he was a master of dialetic. He was master of what it stands for. In a wonderful measure he had the gift of mental perspicacity. It was a substitute for the gifts of the rhetorician and orator. His preaching was a notable triumph of the Christian understanding. There is of course more than one way of realizing the homiletic virtue of intellectual perspicacity. Preachers, who, unlike Calvin, present the truth suggestively, or illustratively, rather than analytically or dialectically, may be clear preachers. It is not the clearness of scientific exactness or definiteness but of rhetorical luminousness. The most effective modern preachers are of this type. But, however it may be realized, perspicuity is the demand.

With mental discrimination is associated the power to

hold thought in its logical relations. An address demands connated and coherent thought. An essay may be fragmentary and remote in its relations of thought. An address must have a manifest unity. To discuss a subject in a public address is to unfold it in its logical relations. It is to discover the different centres or groups of thought that lie hidden beneath the subject and to bring them out to view. This demands the training of the consecutive thinker. A writer of pulpit essays is not the best type of preacher. No one can successfully interpret Christian truth who fails to present it in its inner connections of thought in the form of a connected address. With all this is still further connected the power to grip a subject fundamentally, to grasp its essential principles, to trace it in its wide ranging and fundamental relations. The best type of interpretation consists in grasping the central principle of a truth and in showing how it ranges in various realms of experience. The best preachers of our day deal thus with the fundamental principles of Christian truth, and take them out for illustration into various spheres of human life. This capacity of mental insight, of mental coherence, and of mental grasp and range may be cultivated. He who would vindicate his vocation as an interpreter will not fail to do it.

2. Emotional gifts. Sympathy is the fundamental emotional quality that is requisite. The true preacher is preëminently a man of fellow feeling. The gift of sympathy is the capacity of self-identification with objects external to ourselves. Turned Godward it becomes the prophetic gift. It is by the power of sympathy that the prophet becomes consciously identified with God. It is more than mental self-identification. It is through the consciousness of moral and emotional as well as mental alliance with God that the prophet appropriates and becomes identified with his message. It is this consciousness that is involved in the estate

of prophetic inspiration. Any man who is intelligently conscious of fellowship with God, who recognizes the truth he preaches as having its source in God, and who is thoroughly committed to it, as his message, speaks for God, and such a man knows something of the prophetic spirit. Such a man will not fail to speak with power. There will be the ring of reality in his utterance. The more strongly the truth, redemptive truth, as related to personal beings, gets hold of a man, the more masterful he will be. To recognize the truth as God's, something held in trust to be communicated to one's fellowmen, to know that one enters into sympathetic alliance with God's great purposes, that one thinks God's thoughts of mercy after Him, and that in uttering them he gives God's message, this is a condition of moral power in the preacher's work. Christian oratory of the highest sort has a basis not unlike that of dramatic art. The power of the dramatic actor is in the fact that he is for the time identified with the character he impersonates. In effect he is that character. He who reaches his fellowmen must leave the impression that he is completely identified with what he claims to represent. His speech should have an earnestness and reality correspondent to the weight and importance of what he says. The man who speaks in the enthusiasm of a great inspiration may make mistakes. The spirit of the prophet is not always subject to the prophet. But it is far better to make mistakes than in one's unsympathy to leave the impression of moral unreality.

But not until sympathy is turned manward does it realize the full measure of its power. It becomes preëminently an oratorical requisite. The preacher moves men by entering into their needs with an intelligent sympathy. He has the capacity to be wrought upon on the one side by the truth presented, and on the other side by the human beings to

whom it is presented. The more a man loves his fellowmen, the more he can be moved by them and, other requisites given, the more he can move them. True oratorical feeling is reproductive. We move men by sharing the state of mind that we wish to produce in them. The true preaching impulse is the impulse of a loving mind. The special pleader, the arrogant dogmatist, the man who loves himself, or who loves his opinions, more than he loves his fellowmen, cannot be a true preacher. He may be a stalwart pulpiteer, but he lacks the sympathies of a preacher. I do not say that a preacher must be a man of quick and fiery emotion. Some of the great preachers of the church have indeed been such. But sympathy has many ways of expressing itself. In some way, however, it must make itself felt or no man can move his fellowmen. It is not enough to have it, one must impart it. Sympathy is the source of homiletic tact. Tact is susceptibility to another's touch, the sense of touch, thence capacity to touch others, that is, capacity or facility of self-adjustment or self adaptation of such sort as enables one to touch others. The basis of this susceptibility is sympathy. He who is susceptible to impressions from others, because he loves them, is the one who with skill will adjust himself to them. The most earnest and devoted and effective preachers tell us that they cannot grip the souls of their hearers without a feeling of sympathy that is a great compassionate yearning of heart for them. That Paul was able to "become all things to all men" is a disclosure of his homiletic tact, whose source was sympathy. He identified himself with men and adjusted himself to them that he might win them. This is not a matter of mental skill merely, of intellectual nimbleness. It is a matter of fellow-feeling. The homiletic impulse is a combination of the didactic and the sympathetic impulse. To the intellectual impulse to impart to others the truth that has become a conscious per-

sonal treasure, in order that they may share the treasure, is added the impulse of sympathetic feeling that desires spiritual fellowship. Trained Christian feeling is far more important in the work of the preacher than may at first appear. With the sympathetic spirit is naturally associated the optimistic spirit. Love is optimistic. A loving estimate of men involves the necessity of idealizing them. Christian optimism is precisely the love that "believeth all things" and "hopeth all things." And this is the basis of a cheerful spirit. Cheerfulness is not wholly a matter of temperament. It may be cultivated, and it needs culture. Men need the uplifting power of cheerful, hopeful preaching. There is nothing better to say of any man than that he is an uplifting, helpful preacher. And this may be said of the best preachers of our day. They are men who not only bring to their tasks a hopeful and cheerful Gospel, but who bring hopeful and cheerful souls. A preacher who indulges in low and depressing views of human nature or of human life, and who brings any touch of the pessimistic spirit into the pulpit is foredoomed to failure. Of course that light-headed and light-hearted optimism that ignores the sin and misery of life has no place in the Christian pulpit. Preaching that treats lightly the solemn realities of life will be unfruitful. But redemption is the stock of the preacher's message, and he who does not know it in all its grandeur and who is not lifted by it into a great height of noble Christian feeling is not the man the world is looking for. With cheerfulness and hopefulness is allied courage, strong-heartedness. He who is profoundly sympathetic with and hopeful for his fellowmen will hold tenaciously to the tasks of his beneficence. The real preacher has always been bold to speak what was given him to speak. In his love of men and of the truth he proclaims he has always been able to forget himself. The trimmer, the man who is always on the lookout for personal

consequences, will never make an influential, effective or successful preacher.

3. Spiritual gifts. No unique spiritual qualities that differentiate him from other men, are needed in the Christian preacher, or should be expected of him. All Christian graces and virtues are tributary to his equipment. But some are doubtless more closely identified than others with that peculiar spiritual power for which the pulpit stands, and it is rightly assumed that the preacher will possess them in more than ordinary measure. For example, what Dr. Bushnell calls the "faith talent" is preëminently the preacher's gift. It is this that holds him in open vision of invisible and spiritual realities. Faith is spiritual insight. It is this that lifts one above the things that are seen and temporal. The realization and the interpretation of super-sensuous realities are possible only to a cultured Christian faith. The germinal spiritual gift, in which are contained all best emotional gifts, is love, and it is the culture of the affections that conditions persuasive preaching. Reverence too as of one who deals with the august realities of God, of the human soul, and of the eternal life, is a quality that conditions the most weighty and impressive type of speech. But the point to be emphasized here is that these spiritual qualities do not appear directly in the preacher's pulpit work. They are all necessary to develop the gifts of nature upon which, as thus developed, the effectiveness of preaching depends. And the spiritual factor in quickening native preaching gifts needs emphasis. There is no mere "clerus naturalis." It is the supernatural or spiritual factor that exalts nature into a fit instrument for the service of God. Hence the New Testament everywhere gives prominence to the gifts of grace. Its preaching is a charism. A charism is a gift in which grace blends with nature and which, because it adopts and dominates nature, receives the emphasis. There is no effort to

discriminate between nature and grace or to differentiate them. Here, as everywhere, the religious point of view takes precedence and the gifts of nature are manifest in the higher light of their consecration. This is a fact worthy of most serious consideration as related to the culture of preaching power. It is impossible to fix a limit to the power of grace in its development of the gifts of nature. To divorce the gifts of nature from the gifts of grace would impoverish the pulpit.

4. Rhetorical gifts. A full discussion of rhetorical culture would include the consideration of all those mental gifts —gifts of imagination, feeling, affection, will—and of all those moral and spiritual qualities, whose culture lies behind all most effective pulpit utterance. These gifts are all necessary to the interpretation of religious thought and to its persuasive presentation. They are all significant for different types of preaching and for different qualities of literary style. The treatise is yet to be written that shall do full justice to this subject. But it is the present task simply to direct attention to a few important rhetorical virtues which any preacher should possess and cultivate.

And first I suggest the ability to transmute the material of thought, whatever its quality or source, into sermon pabulum. I mean, in a word, capacity for moral and religious ideas, capacity to turn one's mental resources toward homiletic aims. I call it a rhetorical gift, for the form of one's thought lies back of the form of its expression. The preaching gift is largely a gift for coining thought in the mint of the moral and religious nature. All great preachers have shown this facility for turning thought into moral and religious uses fitted to the practical needs of men. It is mental productiveness as stimulated by moral and religious impulse, and held within the moral and religious domain. It is intelligence vitalized by ethical and spiritual energy. It is a form

of the so-called homiletic mind. It is more than the teaching impulse. It is the impulse to turn the truth to practical advantage. There are minds that work productively and clearly. But they lack the preacher's tact and facility to develop and apply the truth to ethical and religious interests. The real preacher is the man who habituates himself to the turning of all truth into preachable forms and who acquires facility in it.

Ability to translate abstract thought into concrete forms is another rhetorical requisite, forms adapted to the habit and capacities of the average mind, and thus fitted for effective use. A preacher should know theology, for theology is the mental form of religion and is, or should be in some large measure, the preacher's subject matter. But theologizing is not preaching. The thinker must be a speaker. It is not easy to think abstractly and to speak concretely. It is a difficult task to form the habit of thinking scientifically and at the same time to form the habit of turning one's thinking into a popular rhetorical form. But precisely this is the preacher's problem and he who cannot master it will not be a preacher.

Facility of speech is another rhetorical gift, ability to use language freely as well as clearly, correctly and forcibly. There is doubtless a great difference in preachers in this regard. Some have a native gift for speech, and easily train themselves into facility in its use. Others, although not without a slumbering capacity for it, seem to attain to it as by the hardest. What is said of Canon Mozley leads us to infer that he belonged to the latter class. He was not a gifted preacher in the sense that he had not the gifts that condition popular impression, although he was the writer of profoundly impressive sermons. He was slow in overcoming the barriers that seemed to hinder freedom of utterance. But he is an inspiration to any preacher who knows himself

as slow of speech and is willing to do hard work. For he attained not only to great productiveness of thought but to notable facility of expression, although it was not of the popular type. On the other hand there are those whom we call "natural preachers." Mr. Spurgeon was one. Many of the Scotch, Welsh and French preachers are such. They have clearness of thought, earnestness of purpose, an impulse to interpret the truth to the mind and apply it to moral uses, and facility of expression. This is the outfit of the "natural preacher." One who is thoroughly deficient in these gifts will not make a successful preacher. This is especially true of one who has no handling of his mother tongue and cannot express his thoughts with ease and facility.

II. Culture of Gifts

Two practical suggestions are my only contribution to this topic:

1. It were well for every preacher to cultivate assiduously his own most distinctive and individual qualities. Every real preacher has his own strong points, which nature and grace alike invite him to train. In one class of preachers the intellectual activities are prominent. Their intellectual movements are nimble, penetrative, intuitive, gripping promptly the heart of a subject, or they are discursive, dialectical, speculative, grasping a subject in its wholeness or in its implications. The preaching of such men will inevitably bear their distinctive mark. The teaching quality will be prominent, and their success will lie in this line. In another class the ethical qualities predominate. The ethical as distinguished from the didactic aspects of the truth solicit such preachers. Such men are effective in impressing the moral judgments and impulses of their hearers. The man who is strong in his own moral impulses will inevitably be an ethical preacher. In another class imagination, or sentiment, or affection or feel-

ing abounds. Such men will be rhetorically impressive preachers. They will have skill in stimulating the feelings of their hearers, or in chastening their sentiments or affections or in influencing them to action. Thus we have different types of preachers according not only to the demands of the preacher's work but according to the peculiarities of his gifts. But those that belong to the same general class or type have only a very general resemblance. They differ individually not only in degree but in kind. Preachers are didactic, dialectical, speculative, ethical, imaginative, sentimental, emotional, practical, rhetorical in different sorts as well as degrees. There are as many sorts in these different lines as there are individual preachers of mark. Dr. R. W. Dale, for example, was an eminently intellectual preacher. But so was Canon Mozley. So was Robertson and so was Bushnell. But how different in intellectual type. The measure or degree in which the ethical impulse, or sentiment, or feeling, or imagination touched their intellectual activities left as its result a distinct intellectual product. Augustine and Chrysostom had extraordinary power in dealing with the conscience and the emotions, but they were no more alike than Jonathan Edwards and Henry Ward Beecher. Dr. F. W. Krummacher and Dr. Edward Payson were sentimental preachers and of extraordinary power of persuasion, but while belonging to the same general school of preachers, they were no more alike than Claus Harms and Horatius Bonar. Dr. R. S. Storrs is to be classed as a rhetorical peacher. So are Dr. Joseph Parker and Dr. Thomas Guthrie. But how greatly different in their rhetorical qualities. It is not a question of degree but of quality, and every man's strength lies with his own form of the gift. Success will depend upon developing and training that gift. Of course there is need of a broad basis for homiletic as for all other training. But this basis should support what is special to the man. One

will not succeed equally well in all types of preaching. The development of individuality secures reality and effectiveness. No one preaching gift, or group of gifts, is of supreme importance. Every man should be content to do what he can best do, and it is idle to attempt to do what someone else can do better. Men succeed in what God clearly intended they should do.

Richard Baxter was preëminently a pastoral preacher. President Finney primarily an evangelistic preacher. Dr. Dale was an educative preacher and lamented what he regarded as his deficiency in evangelistic power. Dr. Joseph Parker was a popular, impressional preacher and interpreted the truth chiefly through the imagination. Canon Mozley was an apologetic and ethical preacher and never would have succeeded with an uninstructed and immature congregation. Dean Stanley was skillful in presenting his themes in a simple, pictorial manner and could interest children as well as adults. Bishop Brooks' preaching attracted and impressed those who were perplexed and oppressed by the mysteries and burdens of human life. Dr. R. S. Storrs was a rhetorical artist and preached most effectively to a cultivated congregation already persuaded to the truth of evangelical Christianity.

Dr. John Hall preached expositorily with notable success to business men. So did Dr. Wm. M. Taylor. Henry Ward Beecher with his rare power of pathos, inimitable wit, cheerful and hopeful temperament, courageous spirit and broad human sympathies, was an animating and comforting preacher and strengthened men for the battle of life. Father Taylor of Boston seemed born to preach to sailors. These are only a few illustrations taken at random. Each significant preacher has his own gift, is successful in his own line, and it would be idle to discredit it in favor of another. Every variety of gift is needed and may be utilized in realizing the

comprehensive results of preaching. No one man can do everything or succeed equally well on every line. Each must contribute his modicum to the total result.

2. Yet a certain symmetry of homiletic development is desirable. A thoroughly one-sided man weakens the effectiveness of his own best gift. A judicious combination of qualities is consistent with individuality and strength and success in any particular line. The claims of individuality limit and regulate culture, but do not supersede the demand for range. Such range of culture is needed especially in the early part of one's professional career, when homiletic habits are in process of formation. It is thus only that a preacher is likely to find his strong point. It is a matter of experiment. Every preacher should train himself to preach more than one kind of sermons. Such training may be measurably successful without compromising individuality. Preachers are likely to overwork their specialty. Dr. Guthrie cultivated himself too exclusively in a pictorial and dramatic style of preaching. Doubtless it was his strong point, although it is said that he did not discover it at the very outset of his career. The discovery was in a sort incidental, and after the discovery was made, training in it was a matter of deliberate choice and of persistent effort. And thus he over-worked it. He was too much of a Scotchman not to have succeeded in the training of his rational faculties. If he had done that, his pictorial and dramatic qualities might have served him to even better use than they did. He might well have gone to school to such preachers as Robertson. Rhetoricians like Dr. Joseph Parker need to moderate the exuberance of their imagination and emotion. They should go to school to men like Dr. Dale in whom the rational faculties are predominant. I grant the extreme difficulty of the task. It is asking a good deal of a man to take himself in hand and moderate and modify himself. But when habits are forming it may be

done, and it should be done before it is too late. By patient, intelligent effort men find that they succeed better than they could have imagined in lines that are seemingly foreign to them. It should be remembered that many needs are to be met by the preacher. There are but few large and wealthy churches that can secure variety in preaching by increasing the number of preachers. In most of our churches one man must meet the various needs of the same congregation. If he stays any considerable length of time, he must measurably well satisfy those needs, well enough at any rate to hold the congregation as a whole. Preachers in our day find it more difficult than ever to meet the wants of a large number of people of different classes. This is one reason why the pastorate is so short. It explains also why congregations rally about the preacher as a centre and sift themselves and become homogeneous by a process of natural selection. The so-called institutional churches and all large churches of the centralized communions, like the Roman Catholic and Episcopal, are able to supply their congregations with preachers of different types. There are great advantages in this. The Methodist church was obliged to adopt the itinerant system, in order to meet the needs of its constituency, and although it will inevitably be modified, it seems probable that it will be obliged to hold on to it and that it will find its advantage in it. The churches that have a permanent pastorate will find themselves obliged increasingly to secure, if possible, preachers who have some range of homiletic culture and some variety in their homiletic products. Modern culture will force the ministry into broader homiletic training or force the churches into the employment of more than one preacher for the same congregation. Preachers, in the consciousness that their preaching fails to meet all the needs of their congregations, sometimes make frequent exchanges of pulpit with their brother ministers. Something may be done in

this way. But the upshot is likely to be a permanent exchange. By trying one's hand in different lines one may find resources of which he was unconscious. Men do not know what they can do till they have tested the matter. Circumstances often call out men's latent powers. Note men's experiences in extemporaneous preaching. Not infrequently circumstances push preachers on to a platform, where they must try their powers of extemporaneous speech, and then they find that what they regarded as impossible becomes easy. Experimenting on different lines is a good thing. It is this that at last discloses the secret of one's strength, and when one has found it, it will receive the support of training in other lines. This is true especially in the earlier years of one's ministry. No preacher should ever permit himself to tolerate any serious defect in his preaching, if it be possible to correct it. No vocation demands so many-sided a culture as that of a Christian preacher.

CHAPTER IV

THE STUDY OF HOMILETICS

If preaching is the most important of all ministerial functions, homiletics must be the most important branch of practical theology, and the intelligent study of homiletics the most important of all practical ministerial interests. The claim to supremacy of this function has indeed been challenged in our day, but not with success. A new recognition of the importance of other lines of ministerial work is doubtless the outcome of the discussion. But attempt to exalt the value of one line of work by minimizing the significance of another is a poor style of advocacy. Much that is of value has been said in depreciation of certain conceptions of homiletic science and of certain methods of homiletic study. But nothing that has been said in disparagement of the supremacy of the preacher's work is worthy of a moment's consideration. I shall assume that the preacher's place is vindicated and shall spend no time in discussing it. It is the importance of the science of homiletics that partially justifies the American and British custom of detaching it from its acknowledged background and base in practical theology and of giving it separate consideration. The two topics I propose for discussion are the value and the method of homiletic study.

I. The Value of Homiletic Study

1. It furnishes a basis of knowledge for the work of the preacher. Not all the knowledge that is possible of course, but a basis of knowledge, knowledge at least of the theory.

Preaching is an art. Like all art, it rests upon a science. Homiletics does for preaching what any science does for the work it represents. A man may know a thing without knowing how he knows it, as he may do a thing without knowing how he does it. That is, he may have a genius for it. Genius is unconscious, or half-conscious, of its method. One may have a genius for preaching. But even such a man may well covet to know all that it is possible for him to know about his work. Such men are generally in fact most eager students of their art. Good preaching is not so easy for any man that he can afford to treat the conditions of success with indifference. But it is of special importance to those who are not "born preachers," if there be any such class of human beings. In order to know, one must have a way of getting at his knowledge. This is science. The first thing for a preacher to know is what to say. The next thing is to arrange what he says. The last thing is to express what he has thought and planned. Substance, arrangement, expression. Homiletics gives the preacher a well-based knowledge of these problems. The study has value with respect to these three interests. Let us consider them.

The study is a guide in the choice of subject matter. Homiletics, like general rhetoric, is not creative but regulative. It is a formal, not a material science. As a science it has no subject matter of its own. It assumes it as given from other sources. It avails itself of these sources and teaches how to use the material thus secured. Its sources are various, Scripture, theology, ethics, science, history, literature, experience, in a word, whatever may contribute the material of thought that may be converted into homiletic pabulum. The problem is to select such material as is pertinent to the object sought and then to use it appropriately. The material is to be adapted not only to the work of preaching in general, but on particular occasions, on particular sub-

jects, to particular classes of people, to particular types of sermon, and to the particular sermon in hand, whatever its type, its audience, its subject, or its occasion. And as it does not produce but only regulates the choice and use of material, so it does not produce but only regulates the mental energy that handles the material. But, as we shall see later on, the regulation of mental energy may serve to intensify it. It may stimulate the inventive powers. But the point in hand just here is that the selection and use of material must be regulated by considerations that are in harmony with the principles of homiletic science.

It is a guide in organizing the material of thought. As in the choice of material homiletics gets back into Biblical and other sources, so in organizing it, it gets back into the science of rhetoric, and rhetoric gets back into the science of logic, for logic is the science that deals with the relations of thought. Rhetoric appropriates the results of investigation in the science of thought. It prescribes those methods of ordering thought that conform to the ascertained laws of thought. But here rhetoric and logic rest not merely on theory but on experience. Homiletics discusses those methods of ordering thought in the domain of Christian speech that have been found most effective in producing the legitimate results of such speech. It develops a method of its own that is adapted to the specific nature of the work of preaching, and does not slavishly follow the canons of general rhetoric.

It guides in the expression of Christian thought. It teaches how to express thought in a style appropriate not only to the laws of the human soul in general when it expresses itself in speech, but to the nature and object of Christian preaching. It avails itself of whatever will aid in the cultivation of a style of speech that is specifically appropriate to the pulpit. In all this it, of course, presupposes the gifts

and the training essential to the use of language. The problem is to turn these gifts and products of education in a right homiletic direction, so as to produce a type of speech that becomes an effective instrument in presenting the truth of the Gospel.

2. It becomes tributary to the awakening of the preaching impulse. It is a universal fact that all knowledge, whether general or specific, awakens the powers of the soul. It is true in this particular branch of knowledge. Homiletic study prepares the way negatively and indirectly for such quickening by disclosing defects. Homiletics holds before the mind an ideal in the light of which one beholds his imperfections. It is no inconsiderable part of our education to disclose such imperfections and to awaken self-dissatisfaction. The first thing and the best thing to do for any man is to place before him a standard in the light of which he may see his own limitations. We are stirred to self-improvement by the goad of discontent.

But the positive result is the awakening of aspiration. Any slumbering impulse or energy is evoked as well as guided by vigorous intellectual commerce with those external concrete objects that are set over against the impulse or energy, and with the principles that are bedded in these objects. Mechanical inventiveness, or the awakening of the mechanical impulse, for example, is produced by being brought into immediate and vigorous contact, not only with the best mechanical products, but with the principles that are hidden under them. It is the study of the principles as well as of the products of mechanics, that produces skilled workmen. Artistic impulse and invention are quickened by contact not only with the best concrete products of art but by familiarity with the principles of art. Thus in the work of preaching. Knowledge not only of the best sermon products but of the principles that should guide one in the choice of the

subject matter of preaching tends to quicken and to develop the power to produce such material as is appropriate to one's work. It is vigorous agitation of principles as well as familiarity with products that quickens homiletic inventiveness.

So too as regards the question of method. Mental freedom and force are conditioned by the orderly development of thought. Show the mind the right track and it will move in it freely and, therefore, productively and forcefully. Study of the laws of mental action tends to quicken mental action itself. Thus also with regard to the expression of thought. Whatever makes manifest the conditions of free, forceful, clear, graceful expression tends to the quickening of all those activities of thought, feeling, imagination upon which successful speech depends.

3. As securing a basis of knowledge and as quickening the preaching impulse, it follows that the study of homiletics will condition the most effective use of all available resources. It teaches and empowers one to marshal and handle rightly and effectively all the material of one's culture and training, mental, moral, spiritual, even physical. It aids one in the handling of one's mental resources. One may be a good thinker, a good theologian, a good scholar, and may treasure abundant mental resources from all quarters and yet he may not be able to make a proper use of these resources in the pulpit. Something more than knowledge is necessary to make a preacher. The preacher must know how to handle his learning. He must not only think and acquire and know, he must convert his treasures into effective pulpit force. The art of preaching consists precisely in the effective handling of one's self, and of one's knowledge and training and culture in the pulpit. It is only the thorough study of the art that will enable one to do this.

It aids one in the study of models. Models give us homiletics in the concrete. Every good preacher illustrates posi-

tively important homiletic principles. Every defective preacher illustrates negatively. But one must have some understanding of the preacher's task, some understanding of the principles embodied in his work, in order to get the value of the illustration. To know what to appropriate from one's model, one must have some test of its worth, and to know what to reject and avoid one must test the thing to be avoided by some valid principle. All study of models presupposes the application of some sort of test that brings into judgment the one-sidedness, the limitation, or defect of one's work. Otherwise instead of study we should have only a slavish imitation.

It aids one in the best use of personal experience in the work of preaching. All good preaching of course comes out of the school of experience. But the worth of the experience depends on the kind of experience. What if one gets into the wrong school of experience? Experience simply as such has no value. There is bad as well as good experience. There is a false as well as true individuality in preaching. A preacher is rightly jealous of the rights of his personality in the pulpit. Loss of true individuality is loss of power. Better, indeed, keep one's individuality, even though it be very defective, than affect a merely formal correctness. Such correctness is forceless. It is the man, the man himself, that preaches. If one loses what is vital out of his manhood, his work will be crippled. But in speaking of individuality it is pertinent to ask which one, the true or the false? It is the preacher's task to train up and train in the true, and to train down and train out the false individuality. Preaching will go wrong unless regulated by principles that are valid. Behind the art is the science. Experience in the practice of medicine is valuable, but not without medical science behind it. Experience in preaching may be mischievous unless properly regulated. One may get only the more deeply set

in bad ways. It is true that a man of genius may cut out his own path and by a sort of instinctive conformity to the principles of his art succeed unconsciously. But the average preacher, who hasn't the instincts of genius and who knows nothing about the principles of his work, is as really a charlatan as a physician who knows nothing about the science of medicine or a lawyer who knows nothing about the principles of law. Men of genius have a certain sort of success in many lines without a thorough basis of scientific knowledge. But in these days we are not encouraging experiment in this sort of success. After all every man who truly succeeds best must in fact be a student of his business.

It is hardly too much to say that the study of homiletics conditions the use of one's spiritual resources. It is indeed, the presence of the divine spirit in the preacher that makes his preaching spiritually effective. Human resources isolated from the divine are not adequate to the work. But it is equally true that one's training as a preacher may condition the effectiveness even of the spirit of God within one. The divine spirit makes best use of the best instruments, and goodness is not the only effective instrument in the pulpit. We know that our moral attitude with respect to the Holy Spirit conditions the effectiveness of his work in regeneration. We may be equally sure that the preacher's mental attitude and activities with respect to his work will condition the use the Holy Spirit may make of his resources. We know that distinctively spiritual experiences are necessary to effective preaching. But it is not too much to say that the homiletic value of these experiences is conditioned by the use we are able to make of them in our homiletic training. Fra Angelico thought his art as painter a purely supernatural gift. It was the spirit of God that gave him those angelic faces as he traced them upon the walls of his monastery at Florence, and he never changed them. But we know that his religious

inspiration was conditioned as to its effectiveness by the perfection of the artistic instrument through which it wrought, and that it was the skill as well as genius of the painter that made available the higher inspirations of the saint. And do we not also know that it is the skill of the trained preacher in part that makes available for the highest ends the influence of the divine spirit that works within him? Knowledge of the work of preaching, impulse to exercise it, and skill in using it—this is what the study of our science does for us.

If this be so, it follows that the study may be of value in rescuing the work of the pulpit from degeneracy. There are always influences that are conducive to the deterioration of the preacher's work. Schleiermacher found them in his day and gave himself to the task of counter-working them. He suggests not only the need of strong and effective preachers and of a more earnest religious life to counter-work degenerate tendencies, but of fresh interest on the part of all preachers in the study of their work in order to rescue it from the loss of a worthy ideal and to restore its effectiveness. These deteriorative influences are many, and every age is exposed to them. In periods that are past it has been a one-sided intellectualism. The degeneracy of the pulpit during the period of German rationalism is well known. Not only the substance of preaching, but its spirit, and form deteriorated, as will always be the case when the substance deteriorates. If the church loses a strong religious life and becomes rationalistic and speculative, its pulpit will lose evangelical fervor and power. Schleiermacher found the German pulpit in this degenerate condition and he sought to restore not only a more spiritual type of theology, but a more religious life in the churches, and it is notable that he began his work in the pulpit. He not only furthered by his own preaching the development of a more devout and spiritually earnest tone in the German pulpit but he awakened fresh interest in the

whole subject of preaching and in practical theology in general. Much of the one-sided intellectualism that has in time past characterized some types of American preaching has vanished. The preaching of all schools is more earnest and religious in its tone. But in so far as the American pulpit is endangered of detachment from a strong and genuine supernaturalism, the threat of degeneracy is over it, and it will require more than a "new theology"; it will demand fresh study of the preacher's message, of his spirit, of his aims and methods to rescue it. A one-sided devotion to doctrinal theology has been another deteriorative influence. When theology becomes an abstract science and ceases to be a vital interest in human life, when men care more about thought than about life, about truth than about men, about a scientific than about a working theology, the pulpit becomes degenerate. In order to counter-work this there has been needed not only a modification in theology but new interest in the practical application of truth to human life, new interest in the rescue of the pulpit from false ideals. And it is a fact that whenever in the history of the church there has been any increase or decrease of interest in the practical work of preaching, any increase or decrease of desire to make it effective, there has been a corresponding increase or decrease of interest in the study of the science and art of preaching and such increase or decrease has been accompanied by a corresponding result in the work. Note the increase of interest in preaching and the bettering of its quality during the period of the Reformation and during different periods subsequent to the post-Reformation. But dogmatic confessionalism no longer endangers the vitality of preaching. It is rather an equally one-sided reaction against doctrinal theology and a barren agnosticism that threatens to eviscerate it of positive content.

Various forms of secularism are influences that endanger

the effectiveness of the pulpit in our day. A secular temper and tone and habit of mind will devitalize and demoralize any pulpit. It will affect not only the aim and tone but the very substance and form of preaching. Genuine religious awakenings not only evoke new preaching power, but stir new interest in the whole subject of preaching. We have seen this in the religious awakenings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In resisting the tide of modern secularism that sets against the pulpit, it is necessary to keep before the mind the proper aim and spirit of preaching, not less than its proper substance and form.

The inherent difficulties of the preacher's task are another source of influence that endangers diminution of power and they summon the preacher to grapple the more valiantly with his problem. Professor Shedd in the second chapter of his Homiletics has touched upon this in an effective manner. He presents three reasons for the careful study of the science and art of preaching, *viz.*; the dignity and importance of the subject, its difficulties and the demand of the public upon the pulpit teacher. Only a word with respect to the difficulties is admissible here. These difficulties arise partly from the great varieties of need to be met, partly from the limitations of range in the methods of presenting the truth, and partly from the obscurity on the one hand and the familiarity on the other hand of the themes with which the pulpit deals. For any man, however gifted to make luminous and attractive the themes of religion, which touch upon the realm of mystery at every point, but have become familiar by ages of discussion, to keep within the proper limits of pulpit advocacy, and to adjust them to the needs of all classes of people, is no easy task. Of course a study of homiletics alone will not enable one to do this. But it gives one an insight into his problem. It furnishes suggestions as to what is needed. It starts one upon the work of training oneself for his task and

puts him in possession of some of the instruments necessary for it.

II. Methods of Homiletic Study

Four methods are available: investigation of fundamental principles, observation of living examples, analysis of published products and personal experience and criticism.

1. Study of homiletic principles. I begin here, because other methods of study avail only as fundamental principles are mastered. Preaching of course does not begin with science. Science is the product of experience. But experiment is more effective in the light of science. Principles are the summation of the results of inductive processes of investigation. They are the registry of generalized facts. They are available for use. It is not necessary to go through all the processes of inductive investigation in order to get the results. We may avail ourselves of such as are ready at hand. Homiletics as a science is a way of getting at the essential things, the fundamental, the bottom things, the things that make preaching what it ought to be, *i. e.*, its principles. It detaches the principles that are bedded in the work and holds them up to view, makes them objects of observation and reflection, and thus secures a knowledge, or a measure of knowledge, of the nature of the work. In all this study familiarity with other methods is of course presupposed, otherwise the scientific would discredit the artistic aspect of the problem and result in a conventional and stereotyped product. The importance of native gifts and the significance of personal peculiarities are especially recognized. The personal factor is always presupposed and homiletics can not discredit or displace it. As Bishop Brooks says: "Personality is the soil out of which preaching grows." This is not the whole truth, but it is an important truth. The quality of preaching as a personal product will depend upon the quality of the soil of personal manhood. It is not

preaching if it be not the product of a living, human soul. There is no absolute and universal model or ideal of preaching. Every man is summoned to find and develop his own strong point as a preacher, and he must learn largely by experiment. It is a fresh problem to every new comer. But after all the science of homiletics does not deal merely with the individual preacher. It does not at the outset attempt to answer the question: "How should I preach?" It deals with a broader question: "How should any man preach?" By answering the latter question, however, it has done much towards answering the former question. That is to say, there are certain general principles that are valid for all preaching, and to which any man who would be a good workman must conform. No man can be a complete law unto himself in homiletics any more than he can in ethics. The personal factor is doubtless more flexible in art than it is in morals. But even ethics has its individual factor. Ethical science can not, by a general law, determine beforehand how each human being, in every conceivable particular case, should behave. Even casuistry is inadequate to meet all possible cases. But ethical science has, by its formulation of general principles, taken the individual to a very large extent under its regulation. And it is so with homiletic science. It abstracts from concrete reality an ideal of preaching and holds it up before us. Every preacher must avail himself of it in a general way. But each man does it under certain limitations, each in his own way and only to a limited extent. One can only approximate a general ideal. But this general ideal furnishes a background and basis for the personal ideal, which the preacher abstracts from the ground-work of his own personality. An available ideal for preaching therefore, will be a blending of the general and the personal ideals. That is, it will recognize those principles upon which good preaching in general rests, and at the same time it will recog-

nize the demands of one's own personality. But the stress-point just here is that every preacher must get back beyond his own personality in order to answer the question how he should preach. And this takes him a good way back. It takes him into relation with the Scriptures, and this conditions his subject matter. It takes him into relation with the Church, whose minister he is, and this conditions his message and his aim and tone. It takes him into relation with the science of rhetoric, and this conditions the method of ordering and expressing thought. Here one gets a basis for preaching that is scientific. Personality may modify one's work. It will not, can not, be the duplication of another man's work. But it does not create the primary ideal. Now it is true that men of homiletic genius are of great value as illustrating homiletic principles in the concrete. These men perceive intuitively, sense instinctively, and apply unconsciously or half-consciously, the principles of their art. The principles are there, if the preaching is what it should be. And in a sort they regulate the preaching. But they do it unconsciously. Such men do not always know their art. They are half-consciously impelled from within. It is from such men that homiletics abstracts its principles to best advantage. At any rate it may well go to recognized masters of the art and not to inferior, second rate men. But seeing how homiletic principles are illustrated by masters of the art, it is necessary to preserve them in scientific form for the benefit especially of those who are obliged to work consciously and laboriously in order to work successfully or perhaps in order to work at all. A good deal has been said by writers on art about the value of unconscious and unreflective work, as if the nearer men get to savage life the better work they are likely to do. Ruskin glories in this sort of savagery and illustrates from the art of coloring among semi-civilized as contrasted with civilized

peoples. "It is their glorious ignorance of all rules that does it," he says. But whatever may be said in favor of spontaneity in the art of coloring, which is largely an imitative art, and is doubtless largely dependent on the unconscious training of the eye and of the artistic tastes, it is certainly not true of the art of public speech. Of course the art is not acquired by the perfunctory application of external rules, although all ignorance of rules could hardly be called "glorious." But nothing can supersede the mastery of homiletic principles. They give one an insight into his problem. They give one the necessary teaching as to what he has to do and how to do it.

2. The study of living preachers who are models of their art. Good models are of immense value especially to a young preacher. It is a great blessing for young men to have had the privilege in early years of listening to able and accomplished preachers. The writer has had abundant opportunity to note its results in students of preaching. It is noteworthy that most men who attain to eminence in the pulpit recognize and acknowledge their dependence for inspiration upon preachers whom they regarded as models in early years. It is well to listen only to the best preachers that are within reach, and it is well to listen to many preachers and of different types. Thorough study of living models makes it impossible for any man to become an unconscious or a conscious imitator. Nor will such study merely lead one to yield oneself up sympathetically to the preacher. This is necessary in the best study of living preachers. One has on hand the task of analyzing and criticising without any loss of respect for the preacher, or for his work, or loss of responsiveness to the truth which he presents. It is necessary to cultivate the habit of combining clear mental judgment with personal sympathy and respect and with reverence for the sanctities of public worship.

3. Analysis of published products. There is no influence so potent for the youthful student of the preacher's art as that of the living exemplar. But it needs supplementing. The value of a habit of indiscriminate reading of sermons is more than questionable. If it results in a dominance of the reader's mind, it may be pernicious. It is doubtless of value to absorb a sermon in an uncritical manner. By frequent and even rapid reading without critical analysis one may become familiar with a preacher's product and catch his quality and method fairly well. One may come very readily to detect his delicacies and subtleties of thought and feeling and live in a kind of fellowship with his spirit. It is possible and desirable to know a preacher in this way. It is a sort of familiarity that lets one a long way into the inner life of a preacher. There is much in a great preacher like Frederick Robertson or Phillips Brooks that critical analysis does not reach. Some things it never can reach. We come into touch with a preacher's dominating spirit by letting him speak directly to us through his product rather than by effort, to reach it by the processes of critical analysis.

But analysis gives us much. It is an inductive process that gives us the preacher's method. We find him here in his workshop. We see how he handles his tools. It gives one a knowledge of the preacher's range of subjects, of the quality of his theological teaching, the sources from which he draws his material, the characteristics of his expository methods or his methods of interpreting thought to the mind, and of his persuasive methods, or methods of presenting truth to the feelings and the will, his methods of organizing the material of his discussion, knowledge of the different types of sermon that come from his hand, and therefore of the school of preachers to which he belongs, and finally a knowledge of the peculiarities of his literary style.

4. Personal experience and criticism. The skill of the

preacher is largely a product of experiment. Men learn to preach by preaching. And confessedly it demands a good deal of pluck and dash and eager enterprise and unconscious absorption in the actual work of preaching in order to realize the best results of experience. One needs a large measure of freedom. It is fatal to be the bond servant of external rules or to be hampered by a self-conscious correctness in the free and noble service of the pulpit. And yet no man will succeed without remorseless criticism of his own work. There are two points in the genesis of the sermon where rigid criticism will be of most avail. First at the outset in sketching the plan of the sermon. One who has mastered his line of thought will be ready to plunge into work without being hampered in the process of production. The more freely one works in the development of the sermon the better. But no one will succeed in securing the requisite freedom of production without careful preliminary work, and no one secures this without severe preliminary criticism.

Another point is at the conclusion of the work. After one has put his product outside of himself, alienated it and put it at a certain distance from him, he can turn back to it and as from without subject it to successful criticism. It is then and thus that one may be able to eliminate imperfections without much danger of devitalizing the product. The enthusiastic and aspiring preacher will also covet the criticism of fellow students of his art. It is constant criticism that keeps a worthy standard of excellence before the preacher; it discloses the gulf between the product and its ideal, which the preacher is endeavoring to bridge; it evokes dissatisfaction which is the goad of effort; it is the necessary condition of all improvement and of the cheer that comes of success, and it constantly enlarges the scope of one's knowledge of the whole subject and broadens one's reach in wider fields of service.

II

SECTION SECOND

SOURCES OF HOMILETIC MATERIAL

CHAPTER I

BIBLICAL SOURCES OF THE PREACHER'S MESSAGE

THE basis and largely the content of Christian preaching is Biblical fact and truth.* Despite the ravages of Biblical criticism the pulpit still holds, and doubtless will continue to hold, to its Biblical sources. It is generally conceded that the historico-critical method of dealing with the Bible has not damaged it as a text-book for the preacher. It has been found, in fact, greatly to have enhanced its value. Preachers have frequently availed themselves of extra-Biblical sources. It is no new thing in the history of Christian preaching. Scholastic preachers drew from Plato and Aristotle, and from ecclesiastical authorities. Deistic and rationalistic preachers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries drew from works on physical science and from the writings of literary men. But the custom has not generally been regarded as an index of the wealth of the theology of the church or of the dignity and power of its pulpit. In fact it has often been regarded as a mark of degeneracy. In our day the experiment is rare. And this fact may be regarded as proof that the more freely and candidly we handle our Scriptures, and the better our conception of them, the more we respect them. It would be quite impossible for any self-respecting preacher of any school in our day to turn pulpit vagrant and to exploit extra-Biblical writers as homiletic

*There are of course, other sources available for the preacher, but they are subordinate to the Biblical and are utilized as content for the development of the sermon, not as basis for the discussion.

authorities. Once in a while one may hear an extra-Biblical passage quoted as motto to a sermon. Occasionally one may hear an extract from what is called secular literature in connection with the Scripture readings of the church. There is no objection to this so long as no dishonor to the Biblical sources is intended, although apparently citations from outside sources would be far more effective in the main body of a discourse. In occasional discourses in connection with exceptional religious services, in the discussion for example of some theme in comparative religion, it may be desirable to place a passage from the ethical and religious writings of paganism beside a Biblical passage as text, although as already indicated it would seem to be far more effective when introduced into the main body of the discussion. But in connection with the ordinary services of Christian worship it seems much preferable to hold closely to the Biblical sources. The preacher is in general precommitted to such sources, and his commission presupposes that he will not stray widely into extra-Biblical fields. His relation to the Bible, which is recognized as by preëminence the record of revelation, to the Church as the body that is responsible for the communication of Biblical truth through preaching, his relation to the religious needs of men and to the aim to be realized by his calling—all condition his sources. It would lower the standard of the pulpit, it would discredit his proper sources; it would, whether intentionally or not, minimize their value, and would result in the introduction of a subject matter not adapted to the nature and object of his work. Church preaching rightly presupposes a canonical basis. With respect to this canonical basis, however, there are some questions that call for practical consideration.

1. The first question is that of canonical genuineness and authenticity. What practical questions in homiletics Biblical criticism may yet raise we do not know. Hitherto there

has been but little practical difficulty, save in the hands of crude and ill-balanced men. Neither the higher nor the lower criticism has yet very seriously affected Christian preaching. Theological changes have had far more serious results. Textual criticism, however, is a problem of practical homiletic interest. Only a pure text can be the best sort of text. Spurious passages, demonstratively such, should be ruled out of the pulpit. The preacher should know what they are. The revised version of the Scriptures may be relied upon as a guide here, but the preacher should be able to rely upon the results of his own investigation. We draw freely from deutero-canonical writings in cases where questions of authenticity and genuineness are of but little practical importance. But in all most important questions the proto-canonical writings will have the preference. If it were important to quote from Paul as an unquestioned authority, the proto-Pauline writings should have the preference. In such case one would not quote from the letter to the Hebrews, although without doubt one would be quoting from the Pauline school of thought. The whole problem of canonicity may undergo considerable revision, although it would seem to be rather late to revolutionize the canon. But in any event the following considerations are for the preacher worthy of attention.

(1) The preacher's attitude towards the canon is naturally and properly one of good faith. It is in the best sense of the word conservative. Homiletics may well be, and in fact must be, more conservative than critical exegesis, or than any form of criticism high or low. Criticism can not and should not accept the authority of tradition as a guide in its critical processes, although it should be no hardship or discredit to treat it with decency. Criticism is necessarily radical. It has but one question: What are the facts at hand, and what are the legitimate inferences from the facts? Of course

in a sphere involving the religious interests of men it should be duly cautious and balanced in its judgments and good tempered, but in any event it must follow its facts. But homiletics has a prevailingly practical rather than scientific interest. It has behind it the historic church. Its primary task is to perpetuate, to conserve, to enlarge and enrich its life and not chiefly to revolutionize its thought. All changes of thought in ecclesiastical life are properly slow and gradual. The best and most permanent results are secured when they follow normal, evolutionary processes, rather than leap into manifestation by violent revulsion. Homiletics is, therefore, more conservative than criticism. It is more tolerant of tradition. It seeks to interpret, to conserve and perpetuate the truth of tradition. This is done most effectively by a gradual exposure of the errors with which it has been associated, not by violent, radical and revolutionary attack upon them and by disintegrating the forms in which they have appeared. This difference of attitude towards tradition involves no ethical contradiction between homiletics and criticism. There is here no necessary compromise of truth and integrity. It is largely a question of method. It is the preacher's task to adjust himself to the requisitions of both disciplines.

(2) It is confessedly difficult to secure thoroughly reliable results from criticism in entire independence of tradition. External and historic evidences are more important than the literary critic, who is likely to follow his subjective prepossessions is able to see. This may be seen perhaps in critical discussions about the fourth Gospel. A larger respect for tradition should at any rate follow late critical judgments as to the dates of the synoptic Gospels. But in any event until competent critics secure more harmonious results with respect to the more important questions of Biblical criticism, *e. g.*, questions relating to the date and authorship of the fourth Gospel, and of the Epistles that bear the name of Paul, the

preacher may well suspend judgment, or at least be cautious of snap judgment. Only fools rush in where critics "fear to tread." Some of the best critics of the day call a halt and bring confusion into the camp of the pell mell gentry.

(3) The harmony of contested Scriptures with the Christian circle of ideas is a matter of practical importance for the preacher. Even doubtful Scriptures may well be retained and used in the pulpit if they clearly echo the original Christian tradition. It is on this ground that many otherwise questionable passages find standing in the canon, *e. g.*, the first eleven verses of the 8th Chapter of John. The deutero—canonical writings will doubtless hold their ground for this reason.

2. A second question relates to the use of the Old Testament in preaching.* The Old Testament has been found to be of immense value for homiletic use. Instead of being a drag upon the pulpit, as has been claimed by men who are not authorities upon the question, it has proved rather to be a source of great power and profit. Doubtless it has been misused. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries natural religion, so-called, found touching points with it. The book of Proverbs for example, was a fruitful basis for a sort of preaching then much in vogue. It did good service in its way, doubtless, but it was far from a worthy type of Christian preaching, if indeed it could be called Christian at all, and was fruitless of best results. Mystical preachers, who have been afflicted with what has been somewhat coarsely called the "typological concupiscense" have affected Old Testament texts. This extravagant typologizing or its modification, allegorizing, this wild search for the mystical sense is of Jewish origin, and the conception of the Bible behind it is Jewish. It was appropriated by the Roman Catholic Church, and was passed on

*For a full discussion of this question see Die Bedeutung, des Alten Testaments für die Christliche Predigt. von Ernst Binderman, Pastor.

into Protestantism. As this conception has prevailed there has been a disproportionate as well as perverted use of the Old Testament in the pulpit. This was the case prior to the Reformation. Little distinction, if any, was made between the Old and New Testament points of view in the handling of texts. The Reformation restored the New Testament to its proper place. But it did not reform men's conceptions of the Bible. It checked and modified, but did not destroy, the "typological concupiscense." Luther used the Old Testament extensively. Its rhetorical suggestiveness was of great value to him. He highly estimated also its apologetic value. In theory he recognized the importance of getting at the historical sense of the Scriptures in preaching. But he still allegorized. He still held the mystical sense of Solomon's Song. One of the chief reasons probably why the Old Testament has been so largely used in preaching is that it yields itself so readily to the allegorizing method. It has wrought powerfully in the imagination and emotions. It is rich in its rhetorical resources. It has furnished a great amount of fruitfully suggestive but misleading preaching. Luther's allegorizing was doubtless a rhetorical interest largely. Modern criticism, that has restored in exegesis the historic sense of the Old Testament, has alienated the pulpit somewhat from it. But misuse is no argument against right use. A critical reaction against the use of the Old Testament would result in a very serious loss to the pulpit. It is too rich in homiletic material to be set aside. Homiletic use takes us far beyond the limits of strict exegesis. The question is so important for the work of the pulpit that we may well linger with it.

(1) The Old Testament is of great value to the preacher in the abundance of its general religious subject matter. Here are found the truths of universal religion. All those doctrines, which have been called the doctrines of natural religion, are found in the Old Testament. They are assumed, not indeed as

doctrines of natural religion, but as doctrines of Old Testament revelation, to which natural religion readily responds. And this doubtless accounts for the sense of affinity to Old Testament religion recognizable in all forms of deistic and rationalistic religion. But these truths of universal religion are available in the Christian pulpit for most fruitful and practical use. Here also are the germs of some of the most important New Testament teachings. They appear, of course, in Old Testament form. But they are genuine historic germs. In the light of them we understand New Testament teaching better. Teachings relating to the attributes of God, his mercy, justice, fidelity, integrity,—teachings touching his creative activity, providence, sin, redemption, justification, resurrection, immortality, punishment,—all appear in the Old Testament in many forms and have historic connection with the forms in which they appear in the New Testament. Many of them are illustrated at large in historic form and are accentuated in the Old Testament in such ways as were not possible in the New Testament. Thus for example the doctrine of the covenant so prominent in the Old Testament. It lies at the basis of Old Testament religion, and is illustrated in a profoundly interesting manner in the history of the covenant people. All these teachings become a foundation for New Testament teachings.

(2) The concrete historic form of the Old Testament is of immense value to the preacher. All its teachings have a historic background. Its truths run back into the realm of fact. Hebraism is a historic, not an abstract religion. It may be to a considerable extent idealized history, but its idealistic forms are a most valuable method of conveying truth. Pictorial representations of God are especially valuable for pulpit use. God appears here, not as an abstract conception of the mind, but in the processes of personal historic self-revelation. Here all his qualities emerge and are made known and felt in his

personal relations with his people. Here is the living God, the covenant God, the jealous God, the faithful God, the compassionate God, the righteous God, the holy God. All these qualities are more than conceptions or objects of thought. They appear as realities in God, who enters into fellowship with his chosen ones. Anthropomorphic doubtless they are, and for this very reason the more valuable for the preacher. Nothing can be more vivid than these representations of the divine personality and of its active presence in the world. God's manifestations in Providence and in the historic movements of his kingdom are presented in the most powerful manner conceivable, and in forms of representation well fitted for pulpit use, for they appeal to the imagination. Human virtues and vices, individual, domestic, social, political, commercial, industrial are here set forth in living, historic illustration. Few passages in the New Testament are comparable with these Old Testament passages, as basis for the discussion of human virtues and vices. Recall the book of Proverbs, the books of the Psalms, the books of the Prophets, and the historical books with respect to their portraitures of personal and public vices. Robertson's discourses from the books of Samuel illustrated the resources of the Old Testament for the discussion of the ethical aspects of social and political subjects. Some of the best moral instruction from the pulpit, has been, and always may be, presented in biographical and historic form from Scriptures brought from the Old Testament. For the preacher no literature in existence is comparable in many of its features with the biographical and historical literature of the Old Testament. It is of immense interest and profit to all classes of human beings.

(3) The vast range and variety of Old Testament themes are another element of value for the pulpit. It is in part its concrete, historic form that secures this range and variety. Note its wide range of personal and national experiences.

Preachers generally go to the Old Testament for their texts, when, on special occasions they discuss public questions. Even Schleiermacher, who undervalued and, I venture to add, misunderstood, the Old Testament, and who on ordinary occasions, never drew his texts from that source, turned to the Old Testament whenever he discussed political and patriotic subjects. The war in defense of the American Union illustrated the wealth and variety of Old Testament material for the discussion of national and patriotic themes. In its wealth, range and variety of material, as well as in its concrete, historic form, it is especially well adapted to historical, biographical and ethical discourses. It illustrates a great variety of ethical principles in historical and biographical form. Luther noted and remarked upon the fact that people always listened to sermons that dealt with this sort of Old Testament material. All preachers of experience have had occasion to note the same phenomenon.

(4) The exuberance of its rhetorical forms is also of exceptional value to the preacher. This too is involved in its concrete, historic quality, but is worthy of special consideration. The diction of the Old Testament is largely that of passionate feeling, and of poetic or semi-poetic imagery. Its forms are those of the imagination rather than of reflective intelligence. It is ecstatic in its emotional freedom and unrestrained in its poetic license. The moral passion that marks the utterance of the Hebrew prophets finds no parallel in the New Testament. Our Lord's moral denunciations and warnings were often terrific, but their moral poise was the most striking quality in their dreadfulness. Paul's rhetoric was exuberant, often reaching a great height of emotional and imaginative eloquence, but as compared with that of the Hebrew prophets, his utterances were words of soberness. Only when he is caught up into the third heaven does he see things that are unutterable. Then only there are no words for his ecstasy. Christianity was, doubtless,

in the language of Dr. Bushnell, "a gift to our imagination," but it is more strikingly true of Hebraism. Recall the gorgeous imagery of the Book of Job, of the Psalms; of the Canticles, of the prophet Isaiah. The New Testament has nothing comparable in pictorial and dramatic quality. The Apocalypse is more akin to the literature of Hebraism than to that of Christianity. Its lofty and sometimes grotesque imagery is Hebraic in origin and quality. The Old Testament has profoundly influenced the eloquence of the Christian pulpit. Chrysostom, Basil, Augustine, Luther, Bossuet, and moderns, like Robert Hall, and I might add Theodore Parker, have quickened their emotions and kindled their imaginations from these sources. Bushnell's sermon, "Spiritual Dislodgments," and Brooks' "The Conqueror from Edom," disclose the powerful influence of Old Testament rhetoric upon these masters of English style.

Having directed attention to the value of the Old Testament for the preacher, let us briefly note some considerations, regulative for its use.

(a) Books that approximate most nearly to the religious and ethical spirit of the New Testament, or that represent most fully the theistic spirit that is common to Judaism and Christianity, may well have the preference in the choice of texts, for they are most profitable. They readily adjust themselves to the needs of the Christian pulpit. There are portions of the Psalms of which no Christian preacher can make use, save in the way of contrast, and there are passages in the books of the prophets that can be used only by careful adjustment. But taken as a whole they are among the most desirable portions of the Old Testament for homiletic use. As by a homiletic "divination," to use Richard Rothe's term as applied to Augustine's exegesis, the best preachers in different periods of the history of the church have turned to them, have found themselves easily domesticated there, and in their use of them have

found their hearers and met their religious wants. In the apostolic and patristic periods they were valued for their supposed messianic character. They doubtless have less value in this regard in our own day, for modern criticism has modified our conception of their Messianic quality. But this does not in the slightest degree lessen their religious and ethical value. Origin drew largely from these scriptures. So did Augustine and Chrysostom. Later Luther, and later still the Puritan preachers of England. Spurgeon's "Treasury of David" is valueless for the student of Biblical exegesis, but it is of very great value as disclosing the wealth of homiletic material the Puritan preachers found in the Psalms.

(b) Old Testament Scriptures need adjustment to the New Testament point of view. It is of course not always necessary, for not infrequently the points of view are sufficiently alike for practical use. But whenever necessary, it is the preacher's task to make the adjustment. And it is not difficult to pass from the earlier to the later stage of revelation. Sometimes it may be done in the way of contrast. Note for example the contrast between the earlier and later Hebrew conceptions of death and between the Hebrew conception in all periods and the Christian conception. The only good reason, if indeed there were any good reason at all, for choosing an Old Testament passage as basis for a sermon on the resurrection would be the opportunity it would afford for contrasting the Hebrew with the Christian conception of it in its formal and in many of its material aspects. In some such way as this it would be easily possible for the preacher to familiarize his hearers with the contrast between the earlier and later stages of revelation without scandalizing them or disturbing their faith. There are strong contrasts between the ethical points of view of the Old and New Testaments. These contrasts need to be pointed out in the pulpit. It demands something more than Biblical learning to do this successfully. It needs a well-balanced judgment

and the saving grace of common sense, and, above all, respect for one's fellow men.

But the adjustment may be made positively as well. There are many Old Testament Scriptures that illustrate religious and ethical truths and principles that are universal. Experiences there recorded find their counterparts in all time. The principles of God's providential and redemptive revelation are illustrated here at large. The old becomes type of the new, because substantially the same general principles of providence and redemption are at work.* But it is necessary to bear in mind the distinction between the homiletical and the exegetical use of the Old Testament. Its homiletic suggestiveness may very easily be overworked. It is very fruitful in the domain of feeling and imagination. Analogy is easily overdone. Poetic resemblances may obscure fundamental differences. Typology, a form of the application of the principle of analogy to exegesis, is doubtless an important principle for homiletics as well as exegesis, but it has been badly overworked in both departments. Analogy may run wild into allegory. The preaching of earlier periods was badly vitiated by it. It found its worst abuse in doctrinal preaching. But this homiletic caprice has not yet disappeared. It finds a most singular exhibition of itself in a modern school of Biblical literalists and especially among premillenarians. They combine a mystical and pietistic fancifulness and emotiveness with an extreme literalness in their use of Scripture. They import into the text the wildest fancies, and at the same time claim that they hold to the literal sense. They take the Bible "just as they find it" and make it "interpret itself," and then they proceed to pull out what they have already smuggled into it. And what a mess they make of it!

(c) In line with the preceding, it follows that distinctively Christian doctrines or teachings are not found in the Old Testament. The preacher should remember that the Hebrew Scrip-

*See Tholuck's Das Alte Testament im Neuen Testament.

tures belong to a primary and subordinate stage of revelation, and should use them accordingly. Effort to find Christian teachings there has resulted in "wresting the Scriptures" to their own injury and to men's hurt, if not destruction. It is an anachronism. No Christian doctrine of the Trinity, of the Divinity of Christ, of justification by Faith, or death, of the resurrection, of the abode of the dead or retribution is found there. A recognition of this fact is very important for the preacher.

3. Another question soliciting brief consideration is the use of the New Testament. Christian preaching rests of course mainly upon the New Testament. As set in the sphere of Christian worship, and as designed to propagate the Christian Gospel of Redemption, it is pre-committed to a Christian content. It should take us into the very heart of the Gospel. It should deal with the interests of redemption and with those facts and truths that are fitted to the production and development of redeemed and regenerate character. Only the "truth as it is in Jesus" has supreme saving power. The New Testament has had precedence in the best periods of the history of the church, periods of the most intelligent knowledge of the Bible and of Christianity; periods especially of most intelligent religious revival. The Reformation especially was influential in restoring the New Testament to supremacy. The reformers were driven to it for standing-ground in their battle for justification by Faith. Luther in his apologetic preaching relied largely upon it, especially upon the writings of Paul. Modern criticism that has fully restored in exegisis the historic sense of the Bible has turned the preacher again to the New Testament and it has become nominative for the use of the Old Testament.

But what portion of the New Testament may well have the preference? Of course no preacher selects his texts simply because they are found in a particular portion of the Bible, or

for the purpose of testifying his respect for that particular portion of it. Preaching thus based would be likely to be very unprofitable. We choose our texts because they are what we want to fit the themes discussed, or because they are in themselves weighty and fruitful and are what we need. And for precisely this reason we give the New Testament the preference. But among the New Testament Scriptures perhaps the most fruitful and spiritually helpful texts are found in the Gospels. We go most readily to him "who spoke as never man spake." For narrative and descriptive texts we naturally turn to the Synoptists. The fourth Gospel is doubtless rich in this material, but it is especially weighty in the discourses. The historical passages in all the Gospels furnish very fruitful texts for a class of sermons of which we hear too few in the American pulpit; *viz.*, didactic sermons, that make use of historical material in a descriptive and pictorial manner. Popular interest in the life of Christ which has been evoked by such works as those of Geikie and of Farrar, not to name those of a still more weighty character, may suggest the value of discourses on the life of Jesus, in which the narrative and descriptive style is introduced. Books like "Philochristus," which undertakes to portray the life of Jesus from the assumed point of view of his contemporaries, suggest the same thing. The miracles of our Lord furnish material of immense wealth of suggestion. Their apologetic value is doubtless not what it once was. All the more reason why their homiletic value as parables in action of great religious and moral realities should be the more fully appreciated. The Parables are peerless in value for the preacher. The fact that they are unquestionably a part of the original Gospel tradition, their unity, their wealth of suggestion, their pictorial form and the analogies that appeal to the imagination, all adapt them preëminently to homiletic use.* The use of the Gospels in Scriptural selections, for example

*See Lisco's Die Parabeln Jesu, exegetishchehomiletisch bearbeitet.

in the Anglican and Lutheran churches, may suggest their value for the work of preaching. They have long had a certain precedence here as a basis for Scripture readings and for texts. In the Anglican and American Episcopal churches the congregation always rises when the Gospels are read. German preachers give them the preference in their selection of texts. They might well have more abundant and varied recognition among the preachers of all communions. We find here the heart of the Gospel of redemption. Outside the Gospels we naturally go to Paul and John for the weightiest doctrinal texts. They develop Christianity most fruitfully and fully and centrally on the didactic side as James and Peter on the ethical and practical side.

CHAPTER II

CHRISTIAN QUALITY OF THE PREACHER'S MESSAGE

We have seen that the Christian sermon will have a prevailingly Christian content. It will deal with such facts and truths as are designed for and fitted to the production and development of redeemed and regenerate character. What these facts and truths are in detail it will be unnecessary here to consider. They are contained in one all-comprehending Christian theme. That theme is Christ. Christian preaching may be summarized, therefore, as preaching Christ, the presentation of him as the inclusive substance of the preacher's message. Its content is redemptive fact and truth as incorporate in him who is himself the fact and truth of redemption. Truth in New Testament usage means redemptive truth. It is the content of the revelation of God in Christ, the hidden purpose of God in redemption at last revealed. The Greek word ἀλήθεία—truth—etymologically suggests the Christian conception of redemptive revelation. It embodies the notion of a disclosure. Truth is something no longer hidden; it is something that has emerged from obscurity and become an object of knowledge. This conception is realized in Christianity. But the object uncovered and brought to knowledge is concrete, not abstract. It is God, God in Christ in his purpose and work of redemption. This is New Testament truth. It is concrete reality, reality in a person. It involves the uncovering of God Himself. God in Christ. Truth is truth in Christ. Therefore he said, "I am the truth." I am the reality of God in redemption, the reality of his person, of his mind, of his purpose, of his

character as righteous, but above all as gracious, the reality of His redemptive love, the reality of redemption itself. To preach Christianity, therefore, is to preach Christ. But what is it to preach Christ? There is a broader and a narrower conception of it. The narrower conception would concentrate wholly or chiefly upon a fragment of his person or upon a single aspect of his personal self-disclosure as the redeemer of men, that aspect which involves his priestly functions, and the facts and truths that fall within their limits. Preaching Christ will confessedly sometimes have, and may well have, a certain narrowness of range. Religion itself is in one aspect of it a narrow thing. But it is world-vast in its significance, content and result. If, however, it be true that Christ is the central reality of revelation, of theology, and even of moral and religious history, then to preach Christ must have a broader significance. To preach Christ thus is to preach along all the lines that lead up to him and run out from him. Preaching along the lines that lead up to him solicits great range in the use of the Old Testament. Preaching along the lines that run out from him solicits great range in the discussion of all questions that relate to the complex interests of men in their individual and associate lives and relations. Our conception of Christian preaching must grow with the enlargement of our conception of Christ, and of his centrality and supremacy in the world, with the growth and development of human society, and with the enlargement and intensification of human interests. This growth of the conception the Christian church has witnessed. It is manifest in the early Church in connection with the efforts of Christianity, to adjust itself to the expanding and multiplying interests and relations of men. Compare for example the earlier with the later preaching of Paul, if, as doubtless we may, we regard his preaching as illustrated by his letters. Compare the eschatological Christ of the Thessalonian letters with the cosmic Christ of the Ephesian and

Colossian letters. But it is given to our own age to preach Christ more comprehensively than to any preceding age. Let us now note some of the elements of this broader conception of preaching Christ.

i. The root conception involves the presentation of his personality. He in his own person is the concrete historic embodiment and exponent of Christianity. The presentation of Him as such is fundamental not only in our conception of preaching Christ, but of Christian preaching itself. This involves the proclamation of Him as he is presented in the New Testament, for this is our only primal source of knowledge of his historic reality. Doubtless the Christ of the New Testament needs interpretation, and much modification in the forms in which his image is presented to us there is possible. Men's conception and definition of the supernatural element in his historic personality and in the events associated with his life may be subjected, as is already the case, to much revision. But some form of this conception of a supernatural personality must forever attach itself to his manifestation as it emerges in the New Testament. This only is the Christ of the New Testament, and the very existence of the church is identified with this personality, so unique in its quality and relations. In this unique personality centre all the unique historic facts that are connected with the manifestation of his earthly life. This proclamation of a supernatural, historic person of itself gives Christian preaching vast range. Christ turned his preaching back upon himself. He himself is the revelation. He himself is the revealer of God. He, therefore, knows himself always as in vital relation with all he says and all he does. He is not to be abstracted from it, as if, apart from who and what he is, it has any worthy significance. Nor yet is he to be entangled in all he says and does and thus become a morbidly subjective character. With clearest and most tranquil certitude of immediate knowledge, he recognizes himself as the

God-sent, and he as the God-sent is of more significance and importance than aught else. What he says or does is of but relatively little importance or import apart from himself. But he himself has chief significance only as related to Him that sent him. To accept what he says, therefore, and not to accept him, is not to the purpose. And to accept what he did apart from what he was as the God-sent is of relatively little importance. To accept supernatural events even, apart from him, who was himself the supreme supernatural and spiritual reality was no high form of Christian believing. This fact that Christ is the object to be preached demonstrates that he is vastly more than an ethical ideal or a homiletic model. He is the very substance, the very heart, the very pith and marrow of the Gospel with which the preacher deals. This promulging of Christ as a supernatural personality was the center-point of the preaching of the apostolic age. The heart and life, the matter and motive of it all was the person of Christ. His personality gave character to all the facts. He was so much bigger than any or all of the facts that they all seemed natural, no matter how astounding they might be to men of little faith. Those stories of tremendous events did not seem distorted, disproportionate, or inharmonious, because he was large enough to support them. To preach those astounding facts aright, therefore, was simply to preach him who was in them all and gave them significance and character. They did not raise critical questions about them for he supported them. Hence the astounding stories of his birth, his miracles, his resurrection and ascension. All these facts were gathered up in him and in their proclamation they called it all preaching Christ.

ii. The presentation of his personal character is also involved. This entered variously into the apologetic of the early church. It supported the arguments in defense of his claims and even in defense of some

of the chief historic facts. The story of the conqueror of death was simply a perpetuation of the story of the conqueror of sin. In our own day, however, it perhaps receives more attention than it has ever received before. Ethical preaching finds its norm and its impulse in Christ as an ethical ideal. As such he is more fully presented than ever before. Christian preaching is apparently destined to entrench itself more and more in the personal character of Christ. It will fall back upon that character as the ground for its defense of Christianity itself. As at the first, it is apparently destined to have supreme apologetic significance. The time has come again, and under wholly new conditions, when we must summon Christ to the defense of Christianity. It will no longer avail to rest the defense of miracles upon external evidence. We must summon Christ to their defense. It will no longer avail to rest our defense of the resurrection of Christ upon historic evidences. We must summon him to the vindication of the fact of his own last triumph. What he was as the holy one of God, who conquered sin, renders it the more easy to believe that he was also the conqueror of death. What Jesus Christ was as a historic character, as interpreted also and vindicated in the experiences of his disciples for almost two thousand years, is in general one of the strongest defenses of Christianity. His miracles do not so much support him as he them.

iii. The presentation of him in his official character is another aspect. Hereabout have to a large extent gathered the distinctive doctrines of grace, which have generally been regarded as the Christian doctrines distinctively and preëminently. Here are found the doctrinal presuppositions of Christian ethics. With these doctrinal presuppositions, including of course the facts beneath them, as a foundation, ethical preaching must have very wide range. To be more specific, Christian preaching as related to the prophetic function of Christ, to his function as an authoritative teacher, deals with the

matter, the spirit and the manner of his teaching, of which in another connection a fuller word. As related to his priestly functions, or to his representative and mediatorial character, it deals with that whole group of doctrines and facts that relate to the reconciliation of God and man, doctrines and facts that have had vast significance in the historic development of Christianity and rightly interpreted are not of less significance and importance today.

As related to Christ's regal functions, it deals with his centrality and supremacy as a moral and judicial authority, and as a controlling moral and judicial power. It deals with the exalted Christ, "exalted to be a Prince and a Savior." It deals with the kingdom of God as related to his earthly and super-earthly reign. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is connected with the regal function of Christ, for it is this doctrine of the exalted Christ carrying on his redemptive work by the agency of the spirit that reincarnates him in humanity. Modern preaching, as related to the official functions of Christ, covers much more ground than formerly. It deals not so exclusively, and it deals more cautiously and realistically it may be believed, with his priestly functions. It deals more widely with the ethical aspects of his teachings, more broadly with his life as an exemplification of his teachings, and more fully with him as a regal authority, and as a vitalizing moral force in the human race.

iv. To preach Christ is also to interpret his teachings. We may discriminate between the presentation of the person of Christ as an authority in the domain of truth, and the interpretation of those teachings that are the product of his teaching function, although the relation between them is in fact inseparable. For, as suggested above, the teachings of Christ have supreme significance and value at last only from their relation to his person. For he himself is at once the revelation and the revealer. But much of the preaching of our day

deals with what Christ said. Much of it, doubtless, ignores its relation to his personality, or finds no special significance for it in its relation to his personality, and in so far as this is the case, it is superficial and is shorn to a large extent of its chief moral power. Jesus can not be successfully abstracted from his truth for he is in it to vitalize it with moral and spiritual power. The words he spake are spirit and life, for he who is spirit and life is in them. His teachings relate to God and to man and to the relation between them and to their relation to the order of the world. His teachings concerning God relate chiefly to his spirituality, to his moral integrity, but above all to his Fatherly benevolence. But this is not abstract teaching. What he says about God is interpreted and accentuated by his own personal disclosure of the significance of his message. What he says about the high nature and value of man is braced by his own personal disclosure of a perfect manhood, a manhood which is the type and norm of all true manhood. What he says about man's relation to God and God's relation to man is interpreted by his own disclosure of himself as mediator between God and man, and those ethical teachings which must furnish the norm for the regulation of men in their relations with each other are all illustrated in his own perfect moral character and life. The range of such preaching is evident. To preach Christ in this comprehensive sense is to present the entire content of Christianity as related to the person, the character, the functions and the teachings of Christ. He only will think it a small, a narrow or a limited task who has never tested it.

Upon the basis of what has already been said, the following suggestions are pertinent:

And first, to recur to what has already been said, all preaching that is based upon the Old Testament is summoned to give the truths derived from it a distinctively Christian direction, otherwise it will lack the Christian tone and character. Such

use of the Old Testament, as already suggested, is possible. We do not preach as Hebrews or Jews, nor from the Hebrew or Jewish points of view, any more than we preach as independent speculators of this boasted twentieth century, who are inventing a new religion and a new theology.

Again all material from extra-Biblical sources, and the range of such sources may be well-nigh boundless, will appropriately have a Christian aim, will be converted into Christian uses and take a Christian tone and color. All roads upon which the Christian preacher journeys will lead to Christ. All material drawn from any department of human knowledge, from history, from science, from philosophy, ethics, art, industry, politics, should be used to illustrate Christian truth, or the principles of Christian morality, and should be subservient to the moral and religious interests of men. All things are ours as Christian preachers, but only under the condition that we are Christ's as Christ was God's.

The pulpit must of course interest itself in questions that are called secular, questions that do not of themselves belong to the original message of Christianity, nor to its central circle of truths or facts, but only to their practical applications. There are questions that touch the domain of physical science, of social and political science, of philosophy, education, art, industry. The Christian preacher is interested in them, as a preacher, only in so far as they relate themselves to the moral and religious welfare of men, and more especially to the development of a Christian type of manhood, and thus the realization of the final purpose of Christianity. The Christian pulpit must take its central truths and facts out into their practical relations with and adaptations to the earthly interests of men, and it must interpret those interests in the light of these truths and facts and must fit them to every human need. All such questions may be brought within the reach of applied Christianity. All discussion of them should have for its ulti-

mate aim the building of a broad Christian manhood, the enlargement and enrichment of the life of the church, the dissemination of the Christian conception of all human life, and the progress of the kingdom of God. This surely will not fail to secure for Christian preaching an educative power in human society.

The Christian content of the sermon, as thus conceived, will depend largely upon the preacher himself, or upon the man behind the preacher. It will depend upon his conception of Christianity as a Gospel, upon his conception of Christ as the heart and life of that Gospel, it will depend upon his theological tendencies in general, upon his conception of the proper aim of preaching, on his general and specific purpose with respect to the interests of his fellow men, it will depend upon his moral fibre and his common sense. No amount of homiletic skill will produce a Christian sermon. A preacher may have a text that palpitates with Christian life, he may always choose such texts, he may win themes that are Christian from them, he may have a good road for his journey, productiveness, suggestiveness and training enough to grapple with the task of putting his material into sermon form, but without a personal and professional purpose to handle his material Christianly, with personal loyalty as a preacher to his master Jesus Christ, his preaching will go wrong, it will fail in Christian quality and will be unproductive as to the great end of all preaching, the Christianizing or in the larger sense, the humanizing of men.

CHAPTER III

TEXTUAL BASIS OF THE PREACHER'S WORK

THE general topic introduced here is the text—as related to the subject matter of preaching, and it includes two branches, the significance of the text and the value of the text for the preacher.

I. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEXT

It has a double significance and may serve a double purpose. It is primarily the source of the material of the sermon. It is with this just here that we chiefly concern ourselves. As source it holds somehow, either explicitly or implicitly, the germ of the sermon. No matter how it yields its material, whether directly or indirectly; no matter what form the sermon takes, whether textual or topical, its primal import is the same. But the text has a formal as well as material significance and purpose. It not only furnishes the matter of the sermon, it regulates its development. It conditions the movement and so the form of the sermon, and it does this largely by conditioning its material. In the textual or expository sermon, the movement is directly conditioned by it. Matter and form are both immediately dependent upon the text, but the movement of the topical sermon as well is conditioned by it. It limits the material of the sermon, it conditions its specific quality of thought, it restricts its range and should influence its tone. But in doing this it has a certain influence upon the form of the development The text, therefore, is as significant in a formal as it is in a material sense, as significant for the topical as for the textual or expository

sermon. Upon the basis of this statement what follows may become the more evident.

1. We see that the text is a part of the organism of the sermon. As containing explicitly or implicitly its subject matter it is completely identified with the organism. This is etymologically suggested. It is what is woven into and all through the sermon. It is its texture, its tissue. The product is somehow spun out of it. The main thought, or it may be some subordinate thought contained in or suggested by the text, is the raw material of the product. Sermon preparation consists in working out or working over in fit form this raw material into a new fabric—the sermon, or it may be the homily. It does not stand merely at the head of and outside the organism, it enters everywhere as a pervasive presence into its material and formal development. Between the text and sermon, therefore, there is always demanded a manifest material connection and to a limited extent a formal connection. A text that stands wholly outside the sermon, that is not even a figurehead or guide-post to indicate its movement is a radical modification of its original significance. Those who advocate the topical ideal for the sermon, generally regard the text as a "rhetorical device." If this were the meaning of the text, it might be and often would be thrown wholly outside the sermon. It is evident that this view might and often would very seriously affect the character of a man's preaching. Those, however, who advocate the textual or expository ideal of preaching must regard the text as the very pith and marrow of the sermon. So wholly absorbed in the substance of the sermon is it, that some writers, like Claude, for example, do not treat it as a differentiable part of the sermon at all. Homiletic analysis begins with the introduction. The text is lost in the body of the sermon.

2. We may infer also the proper position of the text. Some forms of scholastic preaching placed the text after the

introduction. There were in fact three introductions. The first, after the manner of the classical exordium, was of a "general" rhetorical character. The second was an explanatory introduction, dealing with the text and context and was called "special." The third was a transitional introduction connecting the exposition with the theme, and was called "most special." Thus the text stood between the first or general and the second or special introduction. German preachers in former periods have been in the habit of putting the text after a general introduction. Contemporary German preachers, however, have abandoned the practice and follow the British and American method of beginning with the text. If one wishes to use a general introduction or wishes to start his homiletic movement from a distance, it may be well enough or even desirable to place the text after it. It may seem to justify the preacher in a greater range, if that may be regarded as an advantage. It permits the preacher to move up to his text from any quarter, and then after having reached it to move out from it to his theme. Thus text and theme are brought and kept in close proximity. It is well to follow this method occasionally for the sake of variety, but in general the significance of the text settles the question of its position as at the head of the sermon. As part of the organism of the sermon, introduction and all, everything by supposition being drawn out of it, it should in general stand at the head.

3. It becomes the more evident, also, why preaching has in the history of the church been prevailingly expository. Or better, perhaps, the prevailing method of expository preaching explains the conception and use of the text as the source of the material of the sermon. Such was the preaching of the Jewish Synagogue. An Old Testament passage was the text for the day. Preaching was an explanation and application of it. It was a Scripture reading with a running commentary. In the Apostolic churches an Old Testament messianic passage

was frequently the text, and preaching was merely an exposition and application of it. Gradually the New Testament writings came into use in the public service and were handled in the same way. This is said to have been the origin of the New Testament Canon. Writings that had become fixed in this homiletic use came to be regarded as canonical. If this be the fact the New Testament has a strictly homiletical and practical, rather than a theological or scientific significance and value. Preaching was prevailingly textual and expository from the Apostolic to the scholastic period. Scholasticism did not fully originate, but it developed, the topical method. The expository method was modified or dropped. The Reformation restored it. The reformers' discourses, resuscitating an old scholastic term, were called "postils," that is, things that come after, *i. e.*, after the Scripture readings, namely—the exposition and application, *i. e.*, the sermon, or more properly, the homily (postilla, *i. e.*, verba). This indicates what the prevailing idea of preaching was. It was simply the interpretation and application of Scripture truth. Hence exegesis and homiletics were closely allied. The word text is used in both disciplines. In exegesis it is the basis for exposition, *i. e.*, for note and comment. In homiletics it is the basis for practical suggestion and application as well. The two processes have freely, perhaps too freely, commingled in both departments. There has been a good deal of homiletic work that has been exegetical and there has been much more exegesis that has been homiletical. Modern Biblical science has brought us to a better use of the text. In such use we have come to a better type of Christian preaching.

4. It is evident that topical preaching is a departure from the primitive type. It is, in some sort, a concession to secular culture. It may have had its origin in the eulogistic oratory of the patristic and post-patristic periods, or in the discourses commemorative of the martyrs of the church. It was more

fully developed, as above noted, by scholasticism. Modern culture has appropriated it. It is a necessary and legitimate concession to it, but it is a concession. Classical oratory furnished the original type of the pulpit oration, and classical rhetoric furnished the original theory of it. The culture of our day has modified this to meet the demands of modern types of rhetoric and oratory. Topical preaching is artistic preaching. It furnishes a sphere—and at its best a good one—for the legitimate arts of the rhetorician and orator. Many of the most brilliant and effective sermons of the modern pulpit have been pulpit orations and most of the great doctrinal sermons of the last three centuries have been topical. They were orations or rhetorical disquisitions or addresses on religious themes. The use of a single passage as text is connected with the topical method, and was not common before the scholastic period. Preaching without any text is relatively modern. It is one of the developments, if not one of the abuses, of the topical method, is exceptional and questionably experimental. There is demand for topical preaching. It has enhanced the power of the pulpit, but its value will depend upon the spirit and the method of the preacher. It is here that the personal factor in preaching has free range. This may be a great gain or a great loss. It depends on the man. It may at least be said that whenever Christian preaching has wandered from a Christian basis, it has generally followed the topical method. This may be illustrated by the preaching of the deistic and rationalistic schools of theological thinkers.

II. The Value of the Text

The text is not a fetish. To treat it as such is demoralizing. A superstitious veneration of the Bible, or a conservative homiletic habit furnishes no good reason for attaching it to one's sermon. If a preacher has no use for a text, there is no use in his having it. The man who thinks he must have a

text is likely to twist it, no matter how pious his purpose. The question before us is one of positive value, not of conventional or superstitious use. No preacher has the vocation to defend the use of texts unless he finds them worth while.

1. The significance of the text settles in general the question of its material value, and its material value is the chief thing. That the text is a guide to the sermon is an important consideration, but that it is in any sense the source of the matter of the sermon is still more important. I am inclined to think that the more Biblical, especially the more Christian, one's conception of the nature and object of one's preaching is —the more important the text will appear. Reversely also, it is possible that an intelligent estimate of its value may favorably affect the whole tone of one's preaching. The text at any rate binds one to a Biblical content of truth. If the text were wholly abandoned, it is likely that we should in no long time see the result in the character of preaching. The text demands something distinctive of the preacher. It puts him under certain limitations. Preaching must have some sort of anchorage. Biblical anchorage, at any rate, holds one within Biblical limits. Preaching that has anchored directly back to dogmatic theology, or to naturalistic ethics has never given texts a fair chance. Coming back to a Biblical anchorage ground, preaching has given texts a better chance to show what they can do for it, and what they can do for the preacher as well as for the hearer. The preacher is much less likely to stray into outside fields who recognizes himself as anchored to a Christian text. Preaching of this sort is in harmony with the needs of a worshipping assembly, and will perhaps be less individualistic, or rather erratic. Preaching without texts has often been of a degenerate type. Not infrequently it has been divorced from worship. The preaching monks of the Latin church, in degenerate periods have done this and have harangued the populace in addresses without texts. The ex-

ample would not be a valuable one, and its influence upon the Protestant pulpit could not fail to be detrimental. Scholastic preaching sometimes abandoned texts. Scholastic propositions could easily be deduced independently of them. They were of but little dialectical value. I direct attention once more to the fact that our better modern knowledge of the Bible has increased rather than diminished the preacher's respect for Biblical texts. It is hardly worth while, therefore, for the preacher of our day to follow in this matter degenerate periods and degenerate usage.

2. But it has a formal as well as a material, a rhetorical as well as a logical value. Its use, for example, promotes concentration and unity in preaching. For it binds the sermon back upon some definite center, and binds its parts together. The thought derived from it, or suggested by it, or at least so passed through it as to take substance and color from it, being pervasive of every part of the sermon, it conditions a process of homiletic limitation throughout. The first limitation is, of course, in the text itself. One can not get all there is in a text out into a sermon, even in the textual use of it. This is especially true of the topical sermon. One selects either the main thought or some subordinate thought as the basis of discussion, and excludes all else. The limiting process starts here. Then it passes over into the theme. For one can have no more in his theme than he selects from his text. The limitation appears also in the introduction. For one selects here only what properly introduces his subject, as based upon the limitation of text and theme. Then it appears in the plan and discussion. For one can use here only what is legitimately drawn out of his theme. And, of course, one wants nothing in the conclusion but what is legitimate to the discussion. The whole movement from text to conclusion, although a process of expansion is also a process of limitation. Nor are the limits too narrow. For they condition concentration and unity, and

so strength as well as definiteness of impression. A sermon of this sort may range very widely, but it will be within legitimate limits. Thus by conditioning concentration and unity, the text becomes tributary to rhetorical effectiveness. A loose, miscellaneous range in preaching does not promote effectiveness. A straggling, disjointed sermon is the weakest sort of sermon.

The use of the text also promotes variety, variety in subject matter, but also variety in form. Each text furnishes its own proper theme, hence there will be as many themes as texts. Hence wide range in preaching. Here again limitation involves range. To select what is distinctive in the text as basis for the discussion is to give one's preaching broad scope. Every text, if it is worth using as a text, suggests some phase of a subject. In general, it is a good homiletic device to recognize and select just this phase for discussion. The use of the passage as a text at all, so far as this is practicable, seems to call for it. Consider for a moment the many and various aspects of a single important truth that may be presented by following the natural suggestiveness of individual texts. In general it were well if didactic preaching especially were to follow the lead of such texts. Texts are for the most part concrete and specific, not abstract and general. They take color from their environment. The use of them in their individual characteristics, therefore, promotes not only concreteness and definiteness but variety also. What has been said relates largely to variety in subject matter. But it has a bearing upon form, for we get as many types of sermons, as well as specific subjects, as there are texts, *e. g.*, the historical, biographical, doctrinal, ethical, æsthetic, descriptive, evangelistic, textual, topical, according to the quality of the text. The text conditions form and type. And all this conditions tone also, for the sermon, if it is true to its text, will echo its spirit. Now all this enriches preaching.

And this leads to the suggestion that the use of the text

promotes productiveness in preaching. It quickens thought, it stimulates the imagination, it intensifies emotion, and thus promotes invention. One of the interesting things in the study of modern preachers is the variety, wealth and suggestiveness of their preaching as conditioned by their use of Biblical texts. It is a notable characteristic that they are inclined to select quickening texts, texts that suggest thought by some fruitful principle of mental association. Examine the products of almost any characteristic modern preacher and it will be seen how greatly the preaching is enriched by it. Even the old allegorizing preachers of the better and more temperate sort have their lesson for us. No professional man does so much, so varied and so difficult intellectual work as the modern preacher. It would be utterly impossible for him, without the use of suggestive texts, to produce the same amount and quality of material that is now produced every week. No man but a rhetorical genius could do it. Men like Cardinal Newman have preached exceptional sermons to exceptional congregations without texts. Pastoral preachers have rarely, if ever, done it. No man, in our day, especially, can spin out of his own personal, independent, inner resources two religious orations, or disquisitions or addresses every week and expect to live or to be effective for any considerable length of time.

The above considerations, it may be submitted, in general, answer the objections that have been brought against the use of texts. These objections have been to a large extent from the rhetorical point of view, and the topical method has been assumed as the basis of judgment. Three classes of critics have questioned their value. There is the man of a strongly individualistic tone. The pulpit individualist wants more rhetorical swing than he fancies will be possible when anchored to a text. There is also the preacher that has been trained in the topical method and is a rhetorician. He too wants

scope for his rhetorical impulses. Then there is the preacher of a rationalistic bias, and he is impatient, not only of his limitations as to rhetorical form and as to the æsthetic interest of the sermon, but of his assumed limitations of material that diminish the didactic effectiveness of the sermon. To sum up the main objections; they are as follows: Texts can not be found to fit the necessary themes. If the fit is made, in many cases it must be by forcing it. The use of texts thins out preaching. Limited by his text, the preacher unduly expands his matter. The use results in stereotyped method. Lack of range from text limitation involves lack of variety. Hence stereotyped method. The use limits the range of truths discussed. Thus modern themes are excluded. It will be noticed that some of these objections are from the material point of view. The text limits the use of material. But most of them are based on the assumption that the use of texts limits the rhetorical effectiveness of preaching, and on the assumption that the topical method furnishes the only adequate critical point of view. It will be seen also that they are really a reaction against an abuse of the textual method. Well, if one allegorizes his text, he will, of course, force it to fit his theme, and may do it illegitimately. But a proper study of methods of correspondence will show that this is by no means necessary. If one selects unsuggestive or small and barren texts, his preaching may be thin. But it may be the man rather than the text that is responsible for this quality. If one uses all texts in about the same way, and that an unsuggestive, unimaginative way, of course the preaching will be stereotyped. But here too it is the man, not his texts, that is responsible. If one uses his texts in a prosaic manner, if he has no skill in adjusting them to the current thought of his day, he may shut out modern themes. But all these objections fall flat before the right conception and habit in the use of texts, whether after the textual or the topical method. What has

been said seems to me conclusive as to the rhetorical value of texts, and equally conclusive as to their material value.

But any man may settle it practically. One has only to examine it in the light of the best modern preaching. Take the sermons of any good preacher of our day, and examine carefully the influence of his texts upon the matter, structure, tone and rhetorical style of his sermons. If it is perfectly evident that these texts make little or no contribution to the preaching, if the preaching might conceivably be equally wealthy in its suggestiveness, if just as good matter, form, tone, style were possible without them, then the case of the critic will stand. But I submit that no man who knows the facts can successfully defend the case of the critic. Test the question by critical investigation. If this is not satisfactory, test it by personal experiment.

III. Logical and Rhetorical Qualities of the Text

By the logical qualities of the text is meant the relations of thought within the text itself, or the form of the text as related to its connections of thought. By its rhetorical qualities is meant those qualities that are essential to clear, definite and forceful impression.

1. The logical demand upon the form of the text is complexity,—that is the text must contain more than a single thought. It must be so complex in character that it may be put into some form of statement. By it some definite related thought must be expressed. It must contain the elements of a proposition. It must, therefore, have the elements, not necesarily the full form but implicitly at least the elements of a grammatical sentence, with subject and predicate. A single word, therefore, is never a proper text. It suggests no relation of thought within itself. It is a single unrelated concept. The writer once heard a sermon from the word "therefore." The theme, if memory serves correctly, was the use

of reason in religion. The sermon had no text. It furnished a remote basis for suggestion, but it contained no definitely suggested thought. It affirmed nothing, denied nothing, in fact suggested nothing specifically. It had no relations of thought. It led no whither. One might as well have taken the word "Universe" as a text. Bishop Huntington has a sermon entitled "Names and Elements of the great change," based on the word "conversion." It is not a text, it contains no affirmation that affords a basis for discussion. It simply opens a boundless range of thought in all conceivable directions. It contains no suggestion that it is one of the names of the great change. Much less does it suggest other names or elements of the change. It does not cover what is discussed in the sermon. Regeneration would have been more fully inclusive of Faith, Repentence, and Reformation, as well as of Conversion itself. But that would not have been a text. Nothing in the way of conciseness is gained by the use of a single word as text, or as someone has called it, pretext, as this sermon shows. What the preacher needs in his text is a complex of related thoughts. This demand for complexity is regulative for the use of two or more passages as text. In such use the common difficulty is that they do not readily furnish a single complex unified thought as theme. They are likely to furnish isolated and ununified thoughts. Take as an example of proper use, Bishop Huntington's sermon entitled "The Cross a Burden and a Glory," from Matt. 27, 32. (Simon bearing the Cross) and Gal. 6: 14 ("God forbid etc."). This is one complex theme if we understand the burden and the glory as one complex contrasted thought to be discussed in its contrasted relations under each topic of the sermon, rather than discussed under different topics, *i.e.,* first, the burden and then the glory. For this contrast between the burden and the glory must be manifest throughout the sermon. The theme suggests the contrast and the sermon should keep

the contrast always before the mind. The preacher uses the text in this way. It is, therefore, legitimately used. Take also the sermon by the same preacher entitled "Christ Our Prophet, Priest and King," from John 6:14 (Prophet). Heb. 2:17 (Priest). John 18:33, 36 (King). The preacher discusses each of these functions separately, each passage furnishing a separate topic. A phase of the entire theme is not discussed under each topic, but only a fragment of it. In fact it is not the theme but the divisions that are discussed. The statement of the theme is rather a statement of the topics of the theme. The theme is a complex thought embracing all three elements. These elements should have been discussed in their relations. The threefold function of Christ or Christ in his threefold relation to men would be a proper statement of the theme. From this as a basis, each topic might legitimately be discussed separately.

2. The rhetorical demand upon the form of the text is that it shall express its thought clearly, definitely and forcefully. By which is meant that only so much of a passage may well be taken as will promote those rhetorical interests. There are writers who insist that a complete grammatical structure is always necessary in the form of the text. It should be a complete grammatical sentence. The point of view is the textual and expository method. It is a reaction against the use of single words, that mean nothing,* or of disjointed fragments that pervert the meaning of Scripture. Of course textual and expository preaching demands the full form of the text passage. But some who hold the topical point of view make the same claim.† The ideal here is the statement of the theme in logical or propositional form. This certainly demands a complete grammatical sentence. Otherwise it is not even desirable. Some of the best texts are short frag-

*Claude. "On the Composition of Sermon."
†See Phelps. "The Theory of Preaching."

ments. They are properly the basis of themes stated in rhetorical form, *e. g.*, Heb. 7:26, "Separate from sinners" (Brooks). James 1:27, "Unspotted from the world." "Spotted Lives" (Brooks). Rev. 1:9, "The Kingdom and Patience of Jesus Christ" (Bushnell). "A Man in Christ." "Without God in the World." These passages are clear, definite, pithy, although mere fragments. They encourage a vigorous, sententious, suggestive type of preaching. Preachers like Bishop Brooks, who put their themes in rhetorical form use such texts. Neither, as has been claimed, is the whole of a connected passage necessary. In discussing 2 Cor. 1: 3, 4. Claude insists that the entire passage should be used. To use only a fragment would mutilate it. He is, of course, right from the textual point of view. But Professor Phelps, whose point of view is topical, insists that no part of a connected passage should be left out. This is arbitrary in a topical preacher. If one does not need the whole passage, why pretend to use it as text? If one can get a clear, definite thought out of it, why not use it as a fragment? *e. g.*, 2 Pet. 5:6, "add to your faith * * * temperance." This conveys a perfectly clear, definite thought and expresses it forcefully. Brevity is necessary to forcefulness as well as in general to clearness and definiteness. Vigorous preachers who affect the rhetorical form in statement of the theme, and who are not expository preachers, as Dr. Joseph Parker was, or textual as Robertson was, choose short texts. For the topical preacher such texts are highly desirable. They are strong, incisive, impressive texts, *e. g.*, "The blood of sprinkling that speaketh." "I have called thee by thy name." "Christ who is our Life." Short, pithy, energetic. They are homiletically suggestive and disclose the wealth of the Scriptures for pulpit use. Concrete, especially figurative or poetic texts are tributary to forcefulness and impressiveness, and for the most part to

clearness. Not only the attractiveness, but in large measure the impressiveness of Bishop Brooks' preaching is conditioned by his selection of short and largely of concrete, figurative texts.

CHAPTER IV

EXEGETICAL BASIS OF THE PREACHER'S WORK

THE proper subject matter of preaching can not of course be determined independently of exegesis. In its homiletic relations exegesis deals properly with two main questions. The first question concerns itself with the original, historic sense of any given passage of Scriptures, *i. e.,* the sense as it lay in the mind of the writer. The second question concerns itself with the truth and value of the passage for homiletic use. First the true, original meaning of the text. Second, its worth as truth for preaching use. Exegesis and criticism answer these questions. Without an answer to them no one can be sure that he has a proper theme for his sermon. It is expected of the preacher, therefore, that he will be a competent exegete and critic. He is a popular interpreter. But popular exposition must be based on scientific exegesis. Let us, therefore, look at these exegetical and critical problems. Their homiletical bearings will justify the discussion.

I. The first question relates to the historic sense. Modern exegesis has anchored here. But for the preacher exegetical investigation has wide range. It is a very complex problem.

1. It is first of all a textual question. It starts here. For the preacher textual criticism has a very practical interest. We must, if possible, get at the original form of the text. An unsound textual basis is so far forth an unsound homiletic basis. Some textual corruptions are, indeed, of no practical importance. There may be no material change in the meaning of the passage, or a better meaning may have been se-

cured by the change, or at least a meaning equally good and true. The original meaning of the passage may be uncertain, but it may not in either form be compromised for pulpit use. Romans 12:11 may read "Serving the Lord," or "Serving the Opportunity," *i. e.*, serving the Lord with a fervent spirit, or making earnest judicious use of the opportunities of life, and so being wise as well as fervent. Either reading makes a good text. It does not matter which one selects, unless it becomes perfectly clear which is the original reading. But apologetic and ecclesiastical changes are more serious. What sound criticism rejects here, the pulpit should reject. The Revision has led the way in securing a pure text for the pulpit. It is well to follow it in choosing texts. But the preacher can not justify himself in failing to make a careful examination of all important contested passages.

2. It is a grammatical question. "Grammar," says Immer,* "is and must remain the foundation of all exegesis." It is a question of words and sentences, of vocabulary and syntax. There is no ghostly science that can teach us the grammatical sense of sacred words. "The Scriptures," says Melanchthon, quoted by Immer, "cannot be understood theologically unless they are understood grammatically." We know what is meant only when we know what is said. The best exegetes of our day are grammatical exegetes, Meyer, Pfleiderer, Ellicott, even Alford. Far better than homiletic or theological exegetes, like Lange and Olshausern, are Cremer, Wiener, Buttman and Trench. They are of great value for the pulpit. We make a beginning with grammatical exegesis. With this as a foundation, the theological exegetes, who deal with the course of thought, may be of value. We owe German scholarship a great debt of gratitude for the work it has done in textual and grammatical criticism. It is true that in preaching one may move far from the historic sense of the

*Hermeneutics, page 99, passim.

text, provided he moves on a legitimate line. But no one can know where he is going, or whether he is going in a legitimate direction, without knowing his starting-point. No preacher can fully justify his theme unless at the outset he knows what the writer meant to say. The historic sense is always the proper starting-point. Here the Revision comes to the preacher's aid. It has ruined some old translations, corrected some old readings, and has wiped out some hymns, *e. g.*, Acts 26:28, "Almost persuaded." The first question in homiletics is the question of exegetical legitimacy and without grammatical comprehension, there can be no assurance of such legitimacy.

3. It is a contextual question. Individual thought is known only by related thought. A text-passage is part of a larger whole. Biblical theology has enlarged the scope of our investigation into the context. It is often necessary to get at the scope of an entire document in order to get the full sense of a single passage. Biblical introduction is increasingly important for the work of the pulpit. The preaching of Robertson strikingly illustrates the value of mastering the course of thought for the use of particular passages. He knew Paul's "root-thoughts." Hence he knew better the meaning of individual passages. His method of investigation was a combination of analysis and synthesis, *e. g.*, the tracing through in detail of the thought of a book and then reversing the process and bringing to bear upon these details once more the knowledge of it as a whole thus gained. This is, of course, the only adequate method for an expository preacher. Robertson mastered Paul's theology as a whole, mastered the whole course of thought in a particular document, was able to compare it with other documents, and so was the better able to interpret and use wisely and suggestively individual passages. He who knows the aim of the whole can best interpret the parts. This is one reason why

Robertson is so reasonable, so clear and so helpful a preacher.

The defect, on the contrary, of such preachers as Spurgeon, is that they have no solid exegesis under their preaching. It does not edify intelligent students of the Bible. It does not edify because it does not correctly instruct. Such preachers ignore the context, or misapprehend it. What they can get out of the individual text by some process of fruitful suggestion is the important thing. No matter whether legitimate or not, so it be fruitfully suggestive. The text is isolated and treated independently and is made to mean anything the preacher's fancy is pleased to find in it. It is often, doubtless, very ingenious preaching, but often grotesque and offensive to sound exegetical, as well in fact to sound homiletic judgment. It is not in harmony with the sobriety and rationality of our better exegetical and homiletic methods. This was the sin of the old allegorical method. It ignored the context. It assumed that the individual passage contained an absolute fullness of inspiration, even to the words and punctuation. Each passage, indeed, had several meanings. To develop these hidden meanings and to bring out for edification this fullness of the mind of the spirit was the task of the preacher. Whatever, by any most remote principle of mental association, or by mere verbal suggestion, that has no mental association, is suggested by the individual passage, is included in the inspired word. This, of course, is based, not only on false notions of exegesis and homiletics, but of the Bible itself, as well as of revelation and inspiration. It is mastery of the course of thought that saves preaching from this sort of fancifulness.

4. It is sometimes a doctrinal question, doctrinal in the Biblical sense. Biblical writers must interpret themselves and help interpret each other. In order to understand them we must first isolate them, examine their teachings by themselves and then compare them. Biblical theology is based

upon this principle. How will one understand adequately Paul's teachings, for example, in the Ephesian and Colossian letters, if we may regard them as Pauline, without comparing or contrasting them with the teachings of the Thessalonian or the Roman and Galatian letters? But we have the task also of comparing one writer with another. This gives the old exegetical principle of the "analogy of faith" a new meaning. It is the analogy of Biblical, not dogmatic faith, and this demands thorough Biblical investigation. But the stress-point here is that only by such investigation shall we secure the fullest guidance for the interpretation of particular doctrinal passages. Expository preaching from Paul's writings, for example, would be inadequate and unsatisfactory without such investigation. Texts are properly studied independently of dogmatic theology, but never independently of Biblical theology. The analogy of dogmatic faith, upon which such stress has been laid in times past, has perverted the use of texts. The old doctrinal proof texts are for the most part worthless. We make the Biblical writers interpret themselves and each other, and this furnishes a basis not only for a system of Biblical theology, but in general for more correct as well as more practical and useful work in the pulpit.

5. It is a historical question. That is, it involves study of the conditions under which the Biblical writers wrote, the conditions that affected their education and habits of thought. It makes use of Biblical Introduction. We know more in our day than was ever known before about the Holy Land, and oriental countries contiguous, about the Hebrew race and commonwealth and their history, about contemporary nations and civilizations, about other religions, about early Christianity and the early church and about the influence of contemporaneous philosophic and theologic thought upon them, about those to whom the early Christian writers wrote and about their conditions. In a word, we know more about

time, place, circumstances, conditions, environment. That is, we know the Bible historically as it has never been known before. This knowledge, coming from a very great variety of sources, has been a long time accumulating and a great amount of it has become a common possession. The Bible, therefore, is a more real book to intelligent Christian people than it has ever been before. Knowledge of these things makes exegetical and Biblical science more real, and it makes preaching more real. It makes the life of Christ more real. The realistic biography of Christ is a product of our age. All this throws light upon the meaning of Scripture texts, and preaching, influenced by this historic spirit, method and product, becomes more reasonable. Even a modicum of this knowledge will make itself known and felt in the pulpit. All intelligent preachers of our day are under its influence.

6. It is a rhetorical, or better, a literary question. A literary sense is an important factor in exegetical and homiletic sense. No one knows the Bible aright, and no one can use it aright without knowledge of its literary and rhetorical character. The rhetoric as well as dialectic of the Bible is distinctly oriental. Theology and especially preaching has been greatly enriched by the recognition of this fact. The influence of Herder and of the German romanticists marked an epoch not only in Biblical investigation, but in preaching. In the most attractive and impressive manner, it directed attention to the poetic character of the Bible, especially of the Old Testament. One of the best products of the genius of Prof. Park of Andover was an article, originally a sermon entitled "The Theology of the Intellect and the Theology of the Feelings," in which the poetic and emotional character of the Biblical writings is recognized. One of the most striking of Dr. Horace Bushnell's products is his article "Christianity a Gift to Our Imagination." It contained a recognition of the literary character of the Bible

which was a premonition of genius. The only good work in theology Matthew Arnold ever did was in directing attention to the literary character of the Bible and to the need of literary sense in interpreting it, and it is this chiefly that makes "Literature and Dogma" respectable. The influence of men like Renan, whatever our estimate otherwise of their critical work, has been strong, and in much salutary in this direction. Biblical critics in this country, like Prof. Briggs, indeed all the more intelligent teachers of Biblical theology in our theological institutions have made this a commonplace among intelligent preachers and even among intelligent laymen. In all intelligent communities it affects the work of the pulpit. An investigation of the rhetorical and dialectical methods of the Bible, particularly of the books of the Old Testament, and especially of the books of Job and of Isaiah, and in the New Testament of the writings of Paul would be a most interesting and fruitful line of investigation for any preacher.

7. It is a religious question. A religiously sympathetic spirit in the study of the Bible is of great importance with reference to results in pulpit use. Christian preaching is impossible without assumptions. One of the preacher's assumptions is that the Bible contains a word of God. One's early education pre-commits one to this pre-supposition. It will not, indeed, dominate any intelligent and candid man in his Biblical investigation. The Bible should be studied as any other book is studied. But the result of one's study as well as one's early education will surely be in the case of any devout theist the intelligent conviction of the exceptional religious character of the Bible, and this will constitute a homiletic assumption. One cannot begin his work in the pulpit, without the assumption, or if one please, the intelligent conviction, that he is dealing with the religion of revelation and of redemption. This religion is to be applied to the needs of men, else why do we use the Bible at all? We may

appropriate this assumption in our investigation for pulpit use as the saintly Bengel did for exegetical use. The preacher's attitude toward the Bible is, therefore, somewhat peculiar. He investigates it for preaching use in the main as he would any other book, but in some respects in a different way. He begins, continues and ends his work in special sympathy with its exalted character and purpose. Only in this state of mind may one properly enter the pulpit. The preacher's aim is precisely the aim of redemptive revelation itself. This, of course, does not require that one should suspend all critical judgments. Biblical criticism is subject to the same canons that govern all other lines of critical investigation. But without the religious spirit, sympathetic with the spirit of the Book, it is impossible even to understand the meaning of the truths investigated. Indeed, without it, it may be impossible adequately to get at the meaning of the Scriptures, that record these truths. Especially necessary is this spirit in enabling the preacher to interpret the ideal content of revelation behind the historic form. The pre-supposition of the ideal content is the presence of God in human history, his presence especially in the history of Israel, in the way of redemptive revelation. It is this that furnishes the key to the interpretation of the connection between the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. Only by the assumption of this ideal content in the Bible is it saved to best use in the Christian pulpit.

Now, of course, the kind of work here outlined will require a lifetime for its accomplishment. It need hardly be said that it cannot be successfully applied in detail to the study of individual Scriptures. It is not a programme for textual investigation. In the long run and in the large result it will be found that the best study of the Bible for pulpit use is a general and comprehensive study of it and not merely a study of individual texts. This comprehensive study will furnish

an ever-enlarging and enriching basis for pulpit work. The more comprehensive and thorough one's general exegetical studies, the greater ease and facility will one acquire in applying their results to the investigation of individual texts. It is constant and varied exegetical practice that develops exegetical tact and facility in the homiletic interest.

II. The second exegetical problem, or problem in Biblical criticism, concerns the truth of the text and its value for homiletic use. The question is, how much weight shall be attached to the thought or sentiment of a given passage, either in its historic and primary, or in its secondary or hidden sense, if indeed it have such sense, which is itself a critical question. The preacher can not settle offhand the question whether the Bible has an ideal content. He may idealize his text, he may give it a homiletic turn that is quite remote from its original meaning. But the question whether the idealizing process entered the Scriptures themselves is a critical, not a homiletic question. Now one must be able to answer this critical question if he would secure the best homiletic use or even the right use of texts. Particularly important is this in didactic preaching, in which the success of the sermon depends on correct teaching and on securing correct mental judgments. We may not assume that a given text is of unconditional homiletic value simply because it is found inside the covers of the Bible. In fact it has never been assumed practically, however it may have been theoretically, even in very dark periods, that any given passage of Scripture is the very word of God simply because it is recorded there. An infallible inspiration of the record could never change the quality of a thought or sentiment. It could not make it true if it were false in itself, or good if it were bad. Nor could it dominate our estimate of it, so long as we have a Christian conscience and Christian intelligence left. Texts differ widely in their weight and worth. And the range is

all the way from the absolute in value down to the worthless and possibly positively pernicious, if not rightly understood and used. Now it is the task of criticism to test the value of texts as regards the quality and measure of their truth and as regards their fitness for pulpit use. We must apply the proper doctrinal, ethical and historical, critical and exegetical standards for the purpose of testing their validity and worth. These standards are furnished in part by processes of inductive investigation into the phenomena of the New Testament Scriptures. They are made available by the science of Biblical theology which gathers up its results from Biblical criticism. The one supreme doctrinal, and ethical and so practical historic standard that is available for the purpose is found in the New Testament. The mind of Christ as it appears in the life of Christ and is disclosed in the New Testament and as interpreted according to sound exegetical principles is our test for the worth of all possible Biblical texts.

It would be impossible to classify Biblical texts exhaustively and to apply this test with reference to the question of use and thus to determine their value in such way as would be universally satisfactory. It may, however, be possible to suggest a few classes of texts with respect to which an intelligent preacher will find it necessary to apply the proper critical tests in order to determine their worth for homiletic use.

1. Historical and biographical texts. One may not assume unconditionally and uncritically that all Biblical passages which in form have the appearance of being historical are really such in objective fact. It is a well-substantiated critical discovery that the Bible abounds in what is called idealized history. The historic form is adopted as a literary device for the purpose of conveying, not historic truth, but moral and religious truth. Such, it is claimed, is the book of Jonah. This question can not be settled by dogmatic

affirmation, or by blind adherence to tradition. Whether in a given passage or book we have idealized history or whether we have truth under the form of myth is a critical and a literary question. We must apply the requisite critical and literary tests in order to answer that question. This becomes practically important especially in all cases where correct Biblical teaching is involved. It is not safe in the long run, or in the short run for that matter, to claim more for any portion of the Bible than the case will justify. It is not safe to confound ideal with actual history.

2. Prophetic texts. There are Scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments that claim to be prophetic in the sense of predictive. If a correct report of his words has reached us, our Lord interpreted the words of Psalm 110 as such. But it is evident enough that the so-called predictive passages vary very greatly in their approximations to historic fact, in their conceptions of the Messianic King to whom they are supposed to relate, and in their correspondences to the realities of his historic personage. The value of these Scriptures must be determined ultimately in the light of the New Testament revelation of Christ. It is necessary to find out in what sense and to what extent they are predictive. It is necessary, also, to judge how far New Testament writers were right or wrong in attaching a predictive significance to them. In order to do this satisfactorily, we must have and apply some knowledge of the nature and conditions of predictive utterance, and of the place which prediction holds in the gift of prophecy. Critical exegesis as applied to both the Old and New Testament Scriptures, that contain prophetic elements, gives us the knowledge we need. The value of these Scriptures for homiletic use will depend on the correctness of our conception of their prophetic character. They have, without doubt, done duty somewhat indiscriminately, uncritically and illegitimately in times past. They should do

duty more discriminately in the future, and it is perfectly evident that they will do so.

3. Typical texts. It is a difficult thing for the ordinary student of the Old Testament to resist the impression that there is therein a typical or ideal element. Personages, events, experiences, institutions, ordinances are regarded as typical of what is to emerge in future periods of God's Kingdom. It is a very radical, destructive, and, one may be permitted to add, an extremely capricious criticism that would deny it. It is only a form of historic parallelism. There is a certain inner principle of harmony between the old and the new life and order, although differing widely in form. One age contains types or ideals of future ages, because we have a historic development of redemptive revelation. Our Lord seems to have recognized and authenticated this ideal content in the Old Testament. What emerged under the old order never fully realized itself historically under the old forms. Many Old Testament Scriptures seem to be typically prophetic of the Messianic King and of his experiences. Most New Testament citations from the Old Testament are from this class of Scriptures, among them some of our Lord's citations. But it must be acknowledged that they vary in value, in theological value and especially in homiletic value. In the hands of many New Testament writers they have doubtless been over-worked. This is the case especially with the author of the first Gospel, and of the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is entirely possible to over-press them and to find types where none exist. The Christian pulpit has outdone the New Testament writers. It is easy to confound an illegitimate allegorizing with a genuine and legitimate typologizing. Even genuinely typical Scriptures differ as to the sort and measure of their inner relation with their anti-types. Critical exegesis settles for us the limit and the value of typology. A sound knowledge of Biblical typology, won in

the light of all the best and the fullest that may be ascertained in our day, is necessary to determine the value of typical Scriptures for pulpit use. It is especially important for the preacher to remember that what may be available for him in the pulpit by way of homiletic adaptation in accordance with some legitimate principle of associated ideas may not be available for him exegetically. What may be true in homiletics may be false in exegesis.

4. Allegorical texts. There is unquestionably in the New Testament an allegorical use of the Old Testament. That is, we find a fanciful and strained use of analogy. It appears in the Gospels, especially in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and even in the writings of Paul. There is a marked difference, as Tholuck has shown,* between Christ's use of the Old Testament and that of the New Testament writers in general. It is the difference between real and fanciful likenesses, between a connection of thought that is internal and near at hand, and one that is relatively external and remote. The suffering servant of Jehovah (Is. 53) may be regarded as a true analogue of the suffering Messianic King. But Hagar and Ishmael as related to Sarah and Isaac in Paul's use in the Galatian letter are allegorized. They are fanciful analogies of the two covenants. Judiciously-used allegorized texts may be of value in preaching. But allegorizing should always be recognized as such. It may have its rhetorical uses. But it has no didactic value. A failure to recognize it as a rhetorical device has wrought much mischief in the pulpit. Now it is the science of New Testament Hermeneutics that will furnish a test of value for allegorizing, and we shall find in Christ's use of the principle of analogy a safe guide. No one is likely to make a legitimate use of the parables of our Lord in preaching who does not know that in exegesis they cannot be allegorized. He who recognizes this exegetical principle

*Das Alte Testament im Neuen Testament.

is much more likely to make legitimate use of the analogies they contain.

5. Doctrinal texts. Whether a given text may be used didactically, or whether it may be used to teach definite and explicit doctrines, is a critical question which must be settled in part by a knowledge of the literary or rhetorical character of the passage and perhaps of the book in which it is found. It is necessary to distinguish between the language of imagination and feeling, the language of poetry or fiction and the language of the understanding, the language of mental judgment whose object is to convey a definite explicit teaching to the mind. Poetry and fiction should not be used to teach doctrine unless it be recognized as poetry or fiction, and unless the teaching is recognized as an inference from it conveyed to the mind through the imagination. Moreover, whether a given passage is true, or in what seems true, or to what extent true, is a critical question. The teaching of Christ in general furnishes a test for one's estimate of Old Testament teaching and of its worth for Christian preaching. "The truth as it is in Jesus" tests all half truths and all false utterances that are sometimes found in the Old Testament and in the New Testament as well. The value of the book of Ecclesiastes and of Job for direct, authoritative teaching, however striking their utterances, is quite limited. Their teachings should be recognized for what they are, and no false estimates should be tolerated in the pulpit. The preacher should know their value as sources of religious knowledge, and as a correct basis for preaching, before he can use them properly. When he understands them correctly, then he is in position to use them legitimately.

6. Ethical texts. The ethics of Christ to which the mind and conscience that are trained in the school of Christ always respond is the preacher's test for all Biblical ethics. Old Testament ethics needs constantly to be brought to this test,

the imprecatory Psalms for example. Within the limits of this test, whatever there is in them of ethical value may be made use of by the Christian preacher. There are texts in both the New and Old Testament that in spirit and sentiment are grossly immoral, but in form they may convey valuable ethical suggestions. The words of Caiaphas for example, in John 11:49, 50, recall Robertson's sermon from them. The words of the Jewish ecclesiastics at the cross "He saved others; himself he cannot save." The words of Judas; "To what purpose is this waste?" Such texts have been used with good effect. But their real significance should never be ignored. Contrast is the only principle that makes them admissible. In a word, there is no assignable limit to the scope of the preacher's use of Scriptures that are doctrinately and ethically defective, provided their real character be duly recognized and provided they be adjusted to the Christian point of view. Robertson's sermon above referred to illustrates the value of such texts.

CHAPTER V

HOMILETIC CORRESPONDENCES IN THE USE OF THE TEXT

EXEGESIS, as we have already seen, guides but does not fix our limits in the homiletic use of texts. A text may receive a homiletic turn and use of which exegesis knows nothing whatever. The one supreme and inclusive interest in the use of the text is an adequate correspondence between the text and the sermon. As already suggested, the matter of the sermon must be drawn somehow legitimately out of the text or drawn through it so as to take fibre, color, shape and direction from it and thus a correspondence be realized between the text and the substance, sentiment and object of the sermon.

There are two correspondences that should be realized, correspondence of thought and correspondence of tone. We will consider them in order.

I. Correspondence of thought. The thought-matter of a sermon must be evolved somehow from the thought-matter contained in or somehow suggested by the text. The sermon in its developed form harmonizes at every point with the thought that lies in the text, or is drawn out of it, or drawn through it by some legitimate process of suggestion. This correspondence may be direct and immediate, or it may be indirect and remote. The text may yield the material of thought by explicit declaration or by some process of inference, deduction or suggestion. One may carry the thought of the text, the main or some subordinate thought straight over into the theme, or one may deduce it by some process

of mental association, or by some sort of literary adaptation. Let us examine these two methods of correspondence, the direct or explicit and the indirect and implicit.

1. The direct or explicit correspondence. The text states the theme in definite and explicit terms, sometimes in almost identical terms, *e. g.*, James 4:17, "To him that knoweth to do good," etc. Theme: "The sin of omission." James 2:10. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law," etc. Theme: "Sin a violation of the law in its totality." Here the text at once determines the theme. One would not readily think of any other theme. Some other might be excogitated, but it would come by an indirect process. Reversely, the theme asks for just this text. Probably no other passage in the Bible would fit the theme so well. Such texts, if they can be found, are desirable in the discussion of weighty ethical or doctrinal subjects. That is a perfect text for such use of which you can say that it explicitly suggests but this one theme and that its theme could have but this one or at least no better text. It contains nothing less than the theme, and nothing from without is to be mentally supplied. It contains nothing more and nothing is to be thrown out as irrelevant. It contains nothing other, and nothing is to be modified and adjusted. John 3:7, "Ye must be born again." Theme: "The Necessity of the New Birth." The exact thought. Compare John 3:5, "Except a man be born of water and of spirit," etc., or John 3:6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," etc. The two latter passages contain the necessity of the new birth inferentially; at least they do not affirm it explicitly. And they contain many other possible themes, *e. g.*, The Value of Baptism; The Need of the Holy Spirit in Regeneration; The Conditions of Participation in the Kingdom of God, may come from John 3:5. The Law of Heredity; The Possibilities of Ancestral Piety may come from John 3:6. Relatively few texts furnish but a single

theme, most texts are complex in thought and we are obliged to resort to them. Most of our doctrinal texts even are used inferentially. The truth does not come to us in explicit doctrinal propositions. Revelation reaches us indirectly. A categorical text is doubtless a valuable possession. John 3:7 would be preferable to all other texts in discussing the need of the new birth. These texts are valuable because they are weighty and emphatic and have a certain tone of authority as conditioned by their categorical character. They have the weight of propositions. Moreover, in the use of them, there is no possibility of subordinating what is primary to what is secondary. Such subordination is often necessary in the choice of texts that contain several themes, *e. g.*, Matt. 18:3, "Except ye be converted and become as little children," etc. The necessity of conversion is often deduced from this text. But this is only an incidental thought and it subordinates what is primary to what is secondary. The child-like disposition as condition of entering the Kingdom of Heaven is the primary thought. Another and subordinate thought is childlikeness as the mark of a converted man. The necessity of conversion is a still more subordinate thought. These explicit texts, although limiting the range of themes, do not limit the range of discussion, nor do they necessarily result in stereotyped treatment. They may be treated in a variety of ways; some of them textually, as Robertson would do it, more frequently topically as Bushnell would do it. They may be treated ethically, evangelistically and especially doctrinally, and always didactically, whether doctrinally or not. It is possible that the decline of doctrinal preaching may in part account for the relative non-use of this class of texts in our day. Most preachers incline to the use of texts in a rhetorically suggestive way, as illustrated, *e. g.*, by a sermon of Bishop Huntington's on the "Economy of Renewal," Micah 2:10, "Arise ye and depart; for this is not your rest."

The sermon reminds us of Bushnell's "Spiritual Dislodgments." It is a figurative or an accommodative use of the text that secures the theme. Judah's threatened displacement from their native seats as a resting place suggests figuratively the dislodgments needed in the renewal of character. There may be a certain gain, and there often is in deducing themes for didactic discussion in this indirect way. It may result in a more interesting, animating, and persuasive type of didactic preaching. A rhetorically suggestive text presupposes a rhetorically suggestive method of handling it. But it is also possible that one may be trapped into straining his text, and the rhetorical manner of treatment may not seem harmonious with the strictly didactic object of the sermon. Harmony of tone may be violated. In general a definitely didactic discussion demands a definitely didactic text, if it may be had. At any rate the thing to avoid in the rhetorical or semi-poetic use of a text is a fancifulness that is inharmonious with the sobriety of a didactic discussion.

2. The indirect or implicit correspondence. Here the text yields the theme by some process of indirection, some process of deduction, or inference or oblique mental suggestion. It would be very difficult to classify such processes, for they are as numerous as the categories or classifications of thought and the methods of mental association. Many of these processes of deduction are based on the principle of local contiguity or on the logical relations of thought, *i. e.*, the interior and necessary relations of thought. But most of them are based on the principle of likeness, or consanguinity of thought or the family resemblances of thought. These principles yield vast varieties of method. Let us examine and illustrate a few of these possible indirect methods.

(1) There is the process of logical inference. The correspondence between the text and theme is the correspondence between cause and effect, or effect and cause, or it may be

some form of contiguity of thought, like antecedent and consequent or the reverse, *e. g.*, Bishop Brooks' sermon, Acts 8:8, "And there was great joy in that city." Theme: "The Christian City." The declaration of the text is simply that it was a joyful city. Civic joy, or some such theme as that, would be the generalized thought, if it were to attach itself directly to the text. That it is a Christian city is an inference. It is a legitimate inference for the context shows that the joy spoken of is Christian joy, joy namely which is evidence of the presence of Christianity there, or joy of which Christianity is the source or which was occasioned by its introduction there. But besides this inferential process there is the process of generalization. From the particular city of the text, the preacher passes to the Christian city in general. The relation of Christianity to this particular city is wholly abandoned and some of the characteristics of the true Christian city in general are discussed, *viz.*, Faith, Righteousness, Charity. This sort of text is incorrectly sometimes called the "motto text." But the relations of thought here are less external than in the motto text. The text furnishes something more than a title to the sermon. Such inferential processes are very varied. They have the whole field of cause and effect, and of antecedence and consequence in which to range. Texts thus used yield substantial and at the same time suggestive preaching. They yield large and legitimate truths that stand in the light of larger truths with which they are logically allied. They yield themselves readily to a great variety of themes. In connection with the above-cited text for example we readily think of the principles that lie at the foundation of a Christian civic life, of the consequences that follow the introduction of religion into civic life, of the end or object of Christianity as related to the elevation of civic life. These themes and many others may be deduced, and so limit the discussion. The inferential process is so easy and

natural, preachers so readily form the habit of deducing themes in this way, that it is hardly realized that it is being done at all. But it is well for the preacher at the very outset to form the habit of tracing his processes.

(2) There are the processes that are based upon the principles of likeness. The methods of analogy are the most fruitful methods of correspondence, and their use has great range. (a) The process of generalization, *i. e.*, the process by which the specific truth contained in or suggested by the text is broadened out and put in its most general form in the theme, is based on the principle of analogy. Classification of special objects of thought presupposes likeness. The objects belong to the same family. The process of generalization also involves a process of logical deduction, since we pass from one object or class of objects to another along the line of logically-related thought; *e. g.*, 1 Tim. 4:16, "Take heed to thyself and to thy teaching, continue in these things," etc. The words are addressed to a particular person, who had special functions in the service of the early church. The injunction may be transferred to the present day and enlarged and made applicable to all classes of persons in any kind of official or unofficial service, pastors, evangelists, Bible teachers. The text yields itself readily to textual treatment. Theme: Conditions of successful Christian service. (1) Personal watchfulness. (2) Unflagging devotion. (3) Inspiration of the future reward.

(b) The process of particularization. The general truth of the text is applied to a particular case, or a particular phase of the general truth is selected for the theme, or the truth applied specifically in the text may be transferred in the theme to another and a different but analogous, specific object, *e. g.*, Rom. 14:7, 8, "For none of us liveth to himself," etc. The text is generic. It proclaims a general truth. Living to Christ is the general thought. In the context Paul

applies the principle to the question of unselfish abridgment of Christian liberty. But it may be applied in almost any direction. It readily adjusts itself to any phase of the Christian life, to any hardship, trial, sorrow, loss, joy, success. Whatever it be, the Christian significance of it all is that in it we are to live to Christ. Whether for better or for worse, we are the Lord's. Here too it is to be noted that the specific application of what is general presupposes a basis of likeness, or analogy. (c) Parity of principle. Here we have the use of analogy for the purpose of teaching, and yet it may be so used as to be very attractive and impressive teaching. Dr. Bushnell's use may illustrate, *e. g.*, John 10:3, "He calleth his own sheep by name." Theme: "Personal love and lead of Christ." A textual sermon. The analogy is suggested by the text, and has didactic value. Luke 9:13, "Give ye them to eat." Theme: "Duty not measured by ability." The obligation of the disciples to obey Christ despite their lack of food suggests by analogy, or by parity of principle, that our obligation in general is not measured by our personal ability at any particular time. Note that it is parity of principle that makes this generalization possible. John 20:8, "Then went in also that other disciple." Theme: "Unconscious influence." The lead and consequent influence of Peter upon John in entering the tomb of the Lord on that particular occasion is analogous to the influence which men in general exert upon one another, analogous, *i. e.*, in its aspect of unconsciousness. The solidity and attractiveness of Dr. Bushnell's preaching are in entire harmony with this use of texts. Texts analogically used may also be connected with the theme by way of contrast, and with striking effect, *e. g.*, Jer. 48:11, "Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel," etc. Theme: "Spiritual dislodgments." The untroubled life of Moab, at ease from his youth, like wine

settled on the lees, suggests by contrast the troubled life of Israel. This troubled life with its results is analogous to the Christian life in general with its results in spiritual dislodgment. Note the three processes. *Contrast;* Moab's ease versus Israel's discomfort. *Analogy;* Israel's dislodgments and their results correspondent to the Christian's dislodgments and their results. *Generalization;* the case of a single people correspondent to that of all Christian people. This use of contrast is homiletically justifiable, but it exacts skill. Hebrew 11:8, 9, "By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out," etc. Theme: "The Illusiveness of Life." Abraham went forth in response to a promise that proved to be illusive. So analogically men in general go out into life. Life promises, or seems to promise what it does not fulfill. Hence the general principle, the illusiveness of life. This is a characteristic of Robertson's preaching. It deals with general principles, and the principle discussed is commonly a generalization deduced analogically from the text. Texts thus used are among the most fruitfully suggestive and useful texts.

(d) Figurative adaptation is another use of analogy. There is a difference between that sort of analogy, which, by sometimes stretching the meaning of the term possibly, may be called parity of principle, and which may be used didactically or for purposes of direct teaching, and that form of it which is a figurative or metaphorical likeness, which appeals chiefly to the imagination and is used for the purpose of suggestive illustration. It is often difficult to state or even to see the difference. It is sometimes felt rather than seen. It is a difference in degree rather than in kind. In general it may be called the difference between a prosaic and a semi-poetic use, although it must be acknowledged that many preachers who teach from a parity of principle which they find in the analogy of their texts use them in a semi-poetic

way, *e. g.*, Bushnell's sermon on "Unconscious Influence," and Robertson's "On the Illusiveness of Life." This use of analogy for the purpose of teaching requires much sobriety of judgment lest it degenerate into frivolous figurative resemblances. Analogy used rhetorically and in a semi-poetic way for the chief purpose of illustration, suggestion and impression, may have very wide range. Take *e. g.*, Matt. 8:27, "And the men marvelled saying what manner of man is this," etc. Theme: "The surprises of a complete conscious Redemption." There may be no close inner connection of thought, or of principle between the surprise of the disciples at their rescue from the storm on Galilee Lake, and the assumed or imagined surprise of a redeemed man awakening to the full consciousness of his redemption either in the present or the future life. But the one may be made suggestive of the other, not on a basis of parity of principle, but by a certain figurative likeness. It is a metaphorical adaptation, in which the likeness is somewhat remote, but it is a true likeness and speaks to the imagination, if not to mental judgments. A thing may be true to the feelings, sentiments and imagination, and not true to the critical judgment. Again, John 19:41, "And in the garden a new tomb wherein was never man yet laid." This passage has served a somewhat varied poetic use in the Christian pulpit. The same generic thought variously modified has been deduced from it. The general thought is that there are dark spots in the brightest scenes of life, sorrowful experiences in the midst of its pleasures and beneficences. The Grave in the Garden of Life. In some such way, Henry Ward Beecher has used the passage. So, also, the Rev. Dr. George L. Walker. Each uses it in his own distinctive way, with much fertility of invention, felicity of illustration, beauty of diction and persuasiveness of impression. Christ's walking on the Galilee Lake has been frequently used as figuratively suggestive of his spiritual presence in the tempests of life. It

was thus used by Tholuck. Whether an analogy amounts to parity of principle or is merely figurative adaptation depends somewhat on the way in which it is used. It may be made to suggest likeness of principle, or it may be used as an appeal to the imagination, but we generally recognize the difference between an expository or argumentative use of analogy, one which is for the purpose of instruction or to convince, and one that has a mere rhetorical or illustrative value and that aims chiefly to vivify and enrich thought and make it more impressive. The figurative or metaphorical use is endangered of fancifulness. It may result in a lack of virility and of mental and possibly of moral sobriety in preaching. It is likely to affect artificial resemblances and to degenerate into allegory. It demands sobriety of judgment, but properly used, as the preaching of Bishop Phillips Brooks demonstrates, it greatly enriches the work of the pulpit. This leads us to consider another and an extreme form of analogy.

(e) Allegorical adaptation. The extremest form of figurative adaptation. It is not easy sometimes to detect the difference between them. Metaphorical and allegorical likenesses are both forms of analogy. Paul in his allegorizing of the story of Isaac and Ishmael assumes a certain correspondence between the relations of the two children and the relations of the two covenants, a correspondence to him so striking that he claims the right, a poetic right, doubtless, to make the one the analogue of the other. Luther translates Paul's words, Gal. 4:24, "Which things are an allegory," "Die Worte bedeuten etwas," *i. e.*, the words have an inner significance beyond the external significance of the historic personages and facts. This significance is doubtless an invention of the Hebrew imagination, for who but a Hebrew would have imagined it? It is a strained analogy, and that is allegory. But after all there is an element of likeness here. What differentiates the allegorical use of analogy from other forms of analogy is that

it does not deal with the prominent features of the likeness suggested and those that come easily and naturally from it, but are rather fancifully created by the imagination. To illustrate: The Exodus in its main features may be properly used as typically analogous to spiritual redemption. Entrance into the promised land legitimately suggests entrance into the heavenly rest, but when these historic experiences are minutely individualized and made typically analogous to assumed corresponding spiritual experiences in detail, then the process of allegorizing begins. Paul, therefore, allegorizes in making that smitten rock the type of Christ. The suffering servant of Jehovah in Is. 53 may legitimately suggest the suffering Messianic King. It is a genuine analogy. But when Matthew finds minute individual experiences recorded in the Old Testament fulfilled in assumed corresponding minute individual experiences in the life of Christ, he allegorizes. The parables have been allegorized in this minute way. But it is a principle of modern exegesis, which homiletics should appropriate, that the value of the analogy of the parable for purposes of teaching is limited to its main thought and does not extend to its subordinate thoughts. Any metaphor is useful only for the main thought of the resemblance suggested. When the elements of resemblance are atomized and traced out in detail, the metaphor is allegorized. Allegorical likeness is of but little value to the preacher. What the preacher wants is the inner and generic, not the outer and specific points of likeness. But after all allegory may legitimately be used in preaching, if done with sobriety and with definite recognition of its rhetorical use. In this case it does not differ from any figurative or poetic use of analogy. It is only a difference in degree. Bishop Brooks in his sermons on "The Cherubim" and on "The Sea of Glass" allegorizes his texts. If in Gal. 4:24 or 1 Cor. 10:4 Paul undertakes an exegesis, he is doubtless in error. But if he speaks as a homilist, if he uses these instances as rhetorical

adaptations, uses them illustratively, it is a perfectly legitimate use and does not differ from any rhetorical use of analogy. Exegetically Philo, of course, went wild in interpreting Old Testament characters as simply types of ethical qualities, *e. g.*, Abel of devotion, Noah of righteousness, Abraham of holiness won by striving, Isaac of natural piety, and in attaching no importance to their reality as historic characters. But homiletically what better use could be made of them? Only, of course, if thus used in biographical discourses, the use should be recognized as rhetorical adaptation.

In fact at a time when critical exegesis exacts so closely upon homiletic freedom, preaching may lose something of its rhetorical suggestiveness. Within the limits of mental and moral sobriety, we may allegorize in the pulpit. We may get a great deal more out of the Bible, as we may out of Shakespeare's works or any work of poetic productiveness, than ever went into it. If preaching were to anchor rigidly to modern exegesis it would lose much of its quickening power.

There is a species of correspondence that lies beyond the realm of allegory, but which allegorizing preachers have often used, *viz.*, verbal correspondence. It is a mere verbal suggestion without any remotest correspondence of thought. Such use has generally marked a degeneracy of the pulpit. Preachers of the Roman Catholic Church have sometimes used their texts as puns. Claude seems to have had preachers of this sort in mind when he writes,* "The preacher must be wise, sober, and chaste. I say wise in opposition to those impertinent people, who utter jests, comical comparisons, quirks and extravagances, and such are a good part of the preachers of the church of Rome." Not only a frivolous but a lascivious use of Scripture texts was possible. The Puritan preachers of England were not above this frivolity. Mr. Spurgeon never

*Composition of a Sermon. Chap. II, page 62.

used his text as a pun, but in his early years he used the Latin word for Jesus in the light of a pun, and made it mean "I ease you." Roland Hill sometimes allowed his wit to get the better of him in his use of Scripture. Dean Swift's moral shallowness and insobriety are apparent in that case which has become classic for frivolous pulpit procedure, in which he addressed a congregation of tailors from the text "A remnant shall be saved." It would be impossible in our day for any educated preacher to do this, despite the freedom with which we use the Scriptures.

II. Correspondence of Tone. By this is meant harmony of feeling, sentiment, spirit, taste, literary quality, between text and sermon. Correspondence of thought is possible without this correspondence of sentiment. The character and object of the sermon exact upon the tone of the text that is chosen, and reversely, the tone of the text conditions the tone of the sermon. Lack of harmony here must result in an impression of ineptitude, which no amount of rhetorical skill would be able to overcome. Harmony of tone in the art of preaching is no less important than in the art of music. The ground-tone of the text demands an echo in the ground-tone of the sermon, and reversely. There are two sorts of tone correspondence between the text and the sermon which should be considered, the literary or rhetorical and the ethical.

1. It is a generally-accepted rule that a didactic aim and a prosaic quality in the material of a sermon demand a literary or rhetorical quality in the text that corresponds. The method of handling the sermon may modify the rule. For a rhetorically suggestive method of accomplishing the didactic result may admit of the choice of a rhetorically suggestive text. Such a text should certainly be treated in a way corresponding to its quality. He, however, should be a skillful rhetorician who would attempt it. But a prosaic discussion, a discussion that aims primarily at convincing the understanding certainly calls

for a corresponding text. If the object of the sermon be ethical, an ethical quality in the text that corresponds is needed. An emotional text commits the preacher to the effort to excite an emotion corresponding in the congregation. A poetical text presupposes an appeal to the imagination in the use of a type of diction that is harmonious. The writer once heard a sermon from Is. 63: 1, "Who is this that cometh from Edom," etc. It was a somewhat dull and distinctly prosaic and commonplace discussion of sin. The preacher had not caught the tone of his text. Contrast in this regard the use of the text by Bishop Brooks in the sermon entitled, "The Conqueror from Edom." The inspiration of the text is apparent in the elevated tone of the entire sermon. The dullest hearer would not fail to note the harmony of tone. No preacher who knew his task, or even a man of ordinary sentiment and sensibility, would select Matt. 11:28, 29, "Come unto me all ye that labor," etc., as the basis of a prosaic discussion of salvation as involved in subjection to Christ's yoke, although the substance of that thought may be found in the text. John 17: 20, 21, "Neither for these only do I pray," etc., is a very difficult text for a sermon on the unity of the Christian church, as the writer has found by testing it. It is not easy to preserve the tone of the utterance. It is a part of our Lord's high-priestly prayer. The sermon should never forget this, or at least should never dishonor its sanctity of tone. In choosing an elevated text, one highly emotional or poetic or rhetorically suggestive in its character, one should never flat out into commonplace. It is better to enrich a prosaic text than to impoverish a poetic text in one's handling of it. Emotional texts or texts of sentiment that have become identified with cherished Christian experiences are specially exacting upon harmony of tone. Texts, for example, that relate to the sufferings of Christ, or the joys of the heavenly world. The problem of securing harmony of tone is not merely an æsthetic problem,

but is as well the ethical problem of conserving the exceptionally elevated and impressive character and influence of such texts. German preachers, who, in general, speak more largely to the feelings, affections and sentiments, than American or English preachers, recognize this principle of harmony exceptionally well. They choose their texts with excellent judgment and taste, and treat them with propriety after they have chosen them. This principle of harmony of tone has, as Prof. Phelps has pointed out, served to fix for us a class of texts that appeal to our highest emotions and sentiments and are used largely in evangelistic preaching. It is tone as well as thought that has secured for us these texts that speak so persuasively to the heart and will. Evangelistic preachers of the higher class have always selected their texts with reference to their fitness to further the aim of evangelistic impression. Theological changes and particularly changes in pulpit use of the Bible, have brought out a new crop of evangelistic texts. But the old texts will still demonstrate their power and will still be available for varied use.

Timeliness is involved in part in this question of correspondence of tone. The object of the sermon, as conditioned by the occasion, exacts upon the time-note of the text. The occasional preacher is obliged to exercise skill in his choice of timely texts. The old English preachers, Tillotson, Taylor and South, and the New England Puritan preachers exhibited this skill in the choice of texts for their occasional sermons.

2. Ethical correspondence. We touch here more specifically the ethics of homiletic propriety. The use of the text is a moral question, as well as one of good taste. The text should be ethically worthy of the preacher's calling, of the object of his preaching, of the occasion, of the audience and of the sanctities of public worship. Texts in themselves unobjectionable are often made objectionable by their use. The following classes of texts are morally improper. They are such as

Claude reprehends in the preaching of the Roman Catholic church of his day, and against whose use he warns the Protestant churches of France.

Odd texts are morally objectionable. A text in itself simple and clear may be made fantastic by twisting it from its historic sense and use. A manly man, with a manly object, will have a manly text, and such a man will have a manly sermon. It was in part the homiletic sin of the old allegorizers that they twisted their texts till they become fantastic. It reached its lowest point of degradation in the preaching of the Roman Catholic church prior to the Reformation and had not vanished in the post-Reformation period. But this sort of thing has almost wholly disappeared from the Christian pulpit. Occasionally a pulpit mountebank indulges in it, but it is generally regarded as vulgar. It marks a great advance in the ethical as well as æsthetic tone of the pulpit that this is no longer possible. A better conception of the Bible secures a more serious estimate of it as a text book. Wit and humor are by no means inappropriate in the pulpit. Many great preachers have made use of them. But there is a great difference between flashes of wit such as Luther sometimes indulged in, and which were not uncommon and sometimes seriously objectionable in the preaching of Henry Ward Beecher, and a deliberate, sensational attempt to commit a whole sermon to frivolity by the use of a fantastic text, or by the fantastic use of an honest text. An intelligent estimate of the Bible tends to correct and regulate the moral judgments in the use of wit and humor in the pulpit.

Censorious texts are ethically objectionable. The classical illustration and admonitory example is that of the man, who, on leaving his church, flung as a Parthian arrow Ps. 120:5, "Woe is me that I sojourn in Meshech, that I dwell among the tents of Kedar." Such a man is guilty of a grave moral offense. Nothing can justify a Christian minister in the in-

dulgence of petty spite. It is doubly offensive to draught the Scriptures into alliance with it. There are no Scriptures available for such use, except the imprecations of the Old Testament, and such use of them would be an anachronism and a violation of the first principles of Christian morality.

Puzzling texts are also morally objectionable. They are generally the special property of preachers who affect subjects of merely speculative interest and that are morally unfruitful, or of those who affect rhetorical sensation. The allegorizing habit has allied itself with the use of this class of texts. It has always marked a degeneracy in the moral and spiritual, and I may add, the æsthetic tone of preaching. The preacher who in our day would affect the puzzling process in his use of texts would be regarded as a homiletic crank.

CHAPTER VI

CONSIDERATIONS REGULATIVE FOR THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS

Most preachers select their own texts and themes. In Churches that follow the course of the Christian year, the general subjects to be presented have been prescribed by the ecclesiastical authorities. They are fixed by the different periods into which the church year is divided, and the preacher is limited by them. There are conceivable disadvantages in this. It seems to be a severe tax upon the preacher's ingenuity and suggests a premium upon repetition and commonplace. For the indolent and unproductive preacher it seems to promise a safe retreat, while it also seems to pledge superficiality and unfruitfulness. But in general it is a seeming rather than a real difficulty. It may be that the preaching of churches thus limited lacks somewhat the spontaneity, the independence, and fruitfulness of the preaching of those churches that are free of such limitations. But observation indicates that there is no real restriction here for the better class of preachers. And the necessity of keeping before the mind of the people the great facts and truths of historic Christianity is a distinct gain. The gain is the greater that only subjects and not specific themes and texts are thus prescribed. But in the larger number of Protestant churches neither subjects nor texts are prescribed. The preacher in such churches needs, therefore, an intelligent basis of selection. He needs to take into account the complex demands of his vocation. There seems to be no good reason why the individual sermon should be wholly isolated from subjects chosen for presentation during a considerable period of

time. Isolation is, of course, necessary to a certain extent. The preacher must adjust himself to the broken, fragmentary lives of his people, whose needs he is called to meet. But in general individual selection may well be conditioned by one's larger plans for the work of the pulpit. A habit of storing themes and texts is necessary for any successful preacher. Out of such a treasury one may readily make out a list of subjects, and of texts, at least in a provisional way, for a considerable period of time, six months perhaps, three months at least. To such subjects, especially in the earlier period of one's ministry, it may be possible fairly well to adhere. Intelligent hearers often criticize the lack of unity of impression in the work of the pulpit, the lack of continuity in the subjects chosen and the failure of an intelligent basis of selection so often apparent in the preacher's work. The question, "What shall I preach?" should never be left to the answer of caprice, or of transient impulse. There are rational considerations regulative for choice. What demands then should be taken into account in answering this question in a broad and intelligent manner? The following are among the claims to be met in the work of selection.

I. The needs of the congregation always have the first claim upon the preacher. Timeliness in preaching is necessary to general effectiveness, especially necessary to edification. A word spoken in season has a double power. To its own intrinsic weight is added the weight that comes from the occasion or from the condition of the congregation or even a portion of it. Such timeliness presupposes a reference to the real needs of the congregation. The man who has an intelligent and definite purpose to meet these wants in his preaching will not fail to be timely. What interests the congregation is not an unimportant consideration, for their wishes are often an index of their needs. The desirable and the profitable may be united, and always will be united when it is evident that what people desire

expresses a real want and will therefore become tributary to real profit. It is true that people are not always interested in what is best for them. And a responsible preacher will never permit a congregation to settle for him unconditionally the question of their real and permanent needs. The preacher's estimate of what is profitable should, therefore, have precedence. Experience and observation will settle the balance between what interests and what profits. No general rule will settle it. It may be questioned, however, whether preachers in general sufficiently consider what people want to hear, or what they really wish, although they may not be more than half conscious of it. The habit of soliciting suggestions from the congregation is a good one. Very urgent wants have often been recognized and met in this way. Many a preacher has to acknowledge that he is indebted to his parishioners for some of his best texts and most important subjects and they may often thank themselves for some of his best sermons.

But, of course, what clearly profits independently of all capricious desire, is, as already suggested, the main consideration. The chief reason for interesting people is that their real needs may be the more effectively met, the needs even of a limited section of the congregation, sometimes perhaps even of a single person. This is pastoral preaching. The Pastoral Epistles lay accent upon what "profits the hearer." "Striving about words to no profit" is sharply rebuked. The things to be constantly affirmed are "the things that are good and profitable." It is a very easy thing for a man to become a pulpit crank by selfish devotion to a hobby and a lack of sympathy with the congregation and of devotion to their moral welfare. The building of religious character and the bettering of the religious life is the inclusive interest. But many things are involved in this. It must start in the valley of decision where men choose Christ as the master of life. Ordinary preaching should enter this field.

But there are times when concentration is demanded. One will need to summon into use the arousing, converting, saving truths of Christianity. There are such truths and the preacher must find out what they are. But a large part of the preaching that profits will have for its aim the growth and enlargement of the Christian life. Such preaching will deal with those truths of grace that produce growth in Christian character. It is the effective presentation of Christ as the source and the pattern of life that develops Christian character.

But Christ is also the inspiration and the aim of life. To incite men, therefore, to the choice of the highest ideals of life, to quicken them into Christian activity, to urge them to the cultivation of those productive virtues of the Christian life on which the advancement of the Kingdom of God depends, this also is involved.

There will be times also when the congregation as a whole or in part will need the cheer and comfort of the Gospel of alleviation. The burdened and the careworn are the larger number. And the preacher who would profit must know his Scriptures as a storehouse of comforting truths and facts. No opportunity to say the word of cheer should ever be lost. He who applies sympathetically and skillfully the cheering and comforting truths of the Gospel to those who are oppressed by the burdens of life will win an ascendency which were otherwise impossible. If done in manly fashion, a minister will not fail to make himself necessary to his people. His life will become identified with their lives and he never can become an object of indifference to them. But the end of comfort is enrichment of character. The end of parenetic truth is that it should become edifying truth. Place should always be left in one's selection of subjects for the providences of the people's lives. Here then are four classes of need, decision, edification, inspiration, comfort, and there are four types of truth correspondingly available for the preacher; evangelistic, didactic,

ethical, parenetic. They overlap. It were well, if all were to appear in ordinary preaching. But there will be times when each will need to receive special emphasis.

II. Corresponding to the needs of the congregation, are the claims of Christian truth. For what meets the needs of the people should meet the claims of truth. But it is an object that demands specific consideration. Christianity should be interpreted to men with an approximation to completeness. A statement of the contents of Christianity and of their demands upon Christian preaching would readily furnish suggestions as to the scope of the preacher's presentation.

Themes that cover the chief historic facts of Christianity have the first place. The facts are back of the truths. The truths cannot be worthily apprehended apart from the facts. Here is the value to the preacher of the Christian year. It brings these facts to his attention and summons him to make use of them. The life of the Church is dependent upon them. Advent season, Passion week, Easter, Whitsuntide, All Saints' Day, should never fail of recognition in any Christian communion or in any Christian pulpit.

Themes inclusive of the most important doctrines of Christianity, especially the doctrines of grace, will also find place in the pulpit whose aim is the highest profit of the hearer. There are the great central groups within which the doctrines of grace are found. They are but few, and may be grouped as Bibliology, Theology, Anthropology, Christology, Soteriology, Pneumatology, Ecclesiology and Eschatology. Within these limits lies the entire content of the Gospel message. Of special importance is the recognition of vital truths or facts that have been neglected or obscured because they have been underestimated and undervalued, either generally in the churches or in the church or community where providence has placed one. One might still further add, as an important consideration, the selection of themes whose material will be

adapted to different types of sermons, *e.g.*, expository, textual, topical, historical, biographical, doctrinal, ethical, evangelistic, prophetic, parenetic. These suggestions, of course, only indicate the general scope of our enquiry. They certainly cannot be crowded into the limits of the work of a single year. They are considerations that are properly regulative of one's entire ministry.

III. But the needs of the preacher himself are not an insignificant consideration. For the personal factor conditions effectiveness. It is assumed, of course, that there will be no caprice or self-indulgence in selecting themes. Only with this proviso is it worth while to consider it. But the working relation of the truth to one's own personality is of vast importance in the whole work of preaching.

Personal interest perhaps comes first. Every thoughtful, studious preacher will have his favorite themes. He will be more thoroughly interested in them than in others equally important, perhaps, or possibly even more important. That one can handle most effectively what interests him most is a good reason why one should prefer and should choose such themes rather than those even that might be regarded by many as more important. One is strongly moved by that only which interests him strongly, and one moves others only as one is himself moved. It is true that proportion and perspective may be easily disregarded. One may make a hobby of his subjects, and wrong his congregation by withholding subjects of more vital importance. But for the preacher whose homiletic interests are Christian, this basis of choice is legitimate as it is important.

Personal aptitudes are another consideration. One may well discuss what he is best fitted to discuss. One's intellectual, emotional, ethical, æsthetic tendencies and habits and training condition one's choice of themes. One man naturally affects didactic themes, because the teaching gift is strong in him, an-

other ethical themes and aims, another is at home in the sphere of emotion and sentiment. An extreme of one's speciality is, of course, objectionable, but one is strongest in his own realm, and in the long run one's own speciality is pretty sure to dominate one. What one naturally affects will surely influence one's choice.

Personal familiarity is another consideration. A subject well mastered will be the more effectively handled. Every intelligent preacher may be assumed to have such themes in hand, themes of living, timely interest, Biblical, theological, ethical, social, whatever they may be. With such he is at home. The importance of investigating those subjects that are of primary importance is evident here. Those of secondary importance, in which people are but little interested and which are of but little practical value, should certainly be avoided. A preacher cannot afford to spend time in storing useless knowledge. One who does this will be an unfruitful preacher and will win the reputation perhaps of a pulpit crank. Things that do not profit should have the "go by." From the very outset of one's ministry themes of primal importance to the Christian life should be chosen for investigation. He is the best preacher whose personal tastes and aptitudes harmonize with the interests of the congregation and with the claims of Christian truth. One is always safe in choosing the chief themes of Christianity and in making them centres about which one's thought and study may rally.

Preaching regulated as to the choice of subjects by the above considerations will be secured against caprice. It will be intelligent, discriminating, proportionate preaching. The ground is covered. Experience and good judgment will fix the balance between different demands. How to meet these demands is now a practical question more easily answered. Having in hand the needs to be met, knowing one's people, and their necessities, knowing one's self, respecting the truth of which one is a

steward, one will the more easily determine what to preach and in a reasonable, practical way.

Thus will be secured, moreover, deliberation in the choice of the particular theme for the particular sermon. One is not shut up to one thing. Selection is possible from what seems most pertinent at the time. Present necessity or present inclination will, indeed, sometimes dominate one. One must do simply what he can, or what he is inwardly self-impelled to do, irrespective of all other considerations. But the less of this the better. Here one has a broad and reliable basis for his work. Out of this the individual sermon will the more readily come and with intelligent deliberation. A preacher who works from a basis so broad will always have something to say. It is the "hand to mouth" preacher that will be left without anything to say. And such a preacher may find himself degenerating into the performance of those rhetorical antics that are the agonies of mental and moral poverty or into a commonplace stupidity equally impoverished of mental, ethical, spiritual or genuinely emotional quality.

Freedom and fitness of invention too will result, *i. e.*, in the discovery, choice and development of the thought-material of the individual sermon. Such production must always be conditioned by a good general conception of the scope of preaching and good plans for the realization of such conception. Surely the preacher who shapes the general plan of his preaching with reference to the right sort of results, will be pretty sure to keep this in mind in the process of the development of the individual sermon. For the question is not merely what does this text, theme, plan and development demand, but what do Christian interests demand, what the welfare of men, what is demanded by the truth, what of me as a Christian preacher, not only here and now, but all through and always.

III

SECTION THIRD

TYPES OF HOMILETIC PRODUCT

CHAPTER I

THE EXPOSITORY TYPE

SERMONS may be classified in a variety of ways. A very comprehensive classification would give us the didactic and the practical types of sermon, or the argumentative and the persuasive, or the pastoral and the occasional. But this is too general for purposes of close analysis. The method of development would be another basis for classification and this would give us the textual and topical types. But the method of development belongs properly to formal homiletics. The structure of the sermon can not be discussed without considering the form it takes. The most external classification would be based upon the method of delivery and this would lead us into a discussion of the manuscript, extemporaneous and memoriter types of preaching. This basis we cannot ignore. Our discussion will, therefore, include these three types. But the most complete and satisfactory classification will centre in the content and object of the sermon. Following this method of classification, we first find the sermon whose content is Biblical material and whose object is exposition and practical application. We find secondly the sermon that contains the substance of some formulated doctrine and whose aim is the interpretation or the defense and enforcement of some teaching of church theology. Thirdly, we have the sermon that relates to moral duties and virtues and whose object is moral inculcation in the interest of a practical realization of the claims of Christianity. And then fourthly we come to the sermon that concerns itself specifically with the claims and promises of the Gospel of redemption, and whose object is to persuade men to their

acceptance. Scriptural truth, dogmatic truth, ethical truth, evangelistic truth; Biblical exposition, systematic indoctrination, ethical inculcation, evangelistic conquest. Many sub-divisions under each class are possible. Moreover any sermon, whatever its class, may include elements that belong to all these classes. The truth may be Biblically interpreted, argumentatively discussed, ethically enforced and evangelistically applied, all in the same sermon. Perhaps on the whole that is the best kind of sermon for ordinary pastoral use that combines in some measure elements that belong to all these types. It is however the prevailing quality of content and the leading object that determine the classification. According to the two methods of classification, then, we have before us seven types of homiletic product. We begin with the expository type.

I. The Conception of Expository Preaching

It is the interpretation, illustration and practical application, in appropriate order and form, of a portion of Scripture. As to its basis, the expository sermon rests upon a larger portion of Scripture as its text, than any other type of sermon. In this it differs from textual preaching. The older preachers and writers on homiletics are inclined to identify the textual and expository methods, treating single passages expositorily. Claude would call any method of drawing out the related thoughts of a single passage and expanding them, expository, and what we in our day would call a topical treatment, he would call expository. But properly the textual method interprets the content of but one or two passages, while the expository method deals with a larger amount of Scripture. In its content of development it is, of course, immediately Scriptural. It ranges less widely for its material all through than any other type of sermon. The body of thought comes directly from the Scriptures. Only what illustrates it comes from without.

As to its method, it is primarily explanatory. It may be much else, but whatever the nature of the discussion and whatever practical use may be made of the truth, it is all based immediately upon the exposition. As to its structure the expository discourse has, or may have, a larger measure of freedom than any other type of sermon. It is less controlled by logical and rhetorical considerations. The expository sermon proper has indeed the normal structural form, although even this has large freedom. But other forms are not at all answerable to the demands of structural homiletics.

We are thus led to consider some of its methods. Most of the methods possible fall somewhere within the four following classes. We have first the expository lecture. It may or may not have structural form. Like the Biblical homily, it may follow the order of thought in the text or like the sermon it may have a logical method of its own, rearranging the material structurally to suit that method. Its chief peculiarity is that it has a prevailingly didactic rather than practical interest. Chalmer's lectures on the Epistle to the Romans and Dale's lectures on the Epistle to the Ephesians may illustrate. These lectures are without sermon form and vary greatly in method of treatment. We have next the Biblical homily; a running popular commentary on and practical application of the text. In form it may correspond to the lecture, but in its character it is more popular and practical. Dr. Joseph Parker's preaching was largely of this sort. The modern Bible reading is much like the old Biblical homily.

The expository biographical and historical discourse is another class. This may be handled in an almost unlimited variety of ways. The text need not be a continuous passage, and it may vary greatly in its length. Take the following illustrations. They are all concrete examples.*

*See Classical Library. Expository sermons and outlines on the O. T. English.

Here we have the discourse that takes a single verse as a heading and uses other portions of Scripture as material for expansion. The text is only a figurehead, *e. g.*, Sermon 14, on David.* Text: 2 Samuel 12:7, "Thou art the Man." The text only hints at a single phase of David's character and life, with which somewhat comprehensively the discourse deals. All bears remotely upon the fall, but there is much that does not relate to it. The preacher has exercised his freedom to the utmost.

Then there is the discourse that has an entire chapter as text, bringing in also, in a supplemental way, other Scriptures bearing upon the general subject in the process of discussion. The topics for discussion are suggested by the salient features of these Scriptures in their relation to the general subject. *e. g.*, Sermon 16. "Elijah's Flight," 1 Kings 19.† Plan: (1) Circumstances of the time in which Elijah lived. (2) Flight. (3) God's treatment of him, concluding with two inferential practical suggestions. Here too we have an illustration of homiletic freedom.

We have too the discourse that has no text at all. An example may be found in Dr. Joseph Parker's discourse on Judas Iscariot.‡ The material is gathered from all the passages in the New Testament that refer to Judas. The first part is expository, the second practical. All these are illustrations of wide possibilities. And these possibilities are not limited to biographical and historical discourses, although they may have a wider range in these spheres.

We have finally the expository sermon proper. It is like any topical sermon, with the difference that it gets all its material from the Scriptures. It has all the parts of a topical sermon, introduction, theme, divisions, orderly development and con-

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*Archdeacon Farrar.

†Dr. Davidson.

‡"Things Concerning Himself," page 349.

clusion, all bound together in topical unity. This is the method of Frederick W. Robertson, with the limitation that he failed to formulate his theme. It is a valuable method. It is not so distinctively didactic as the expository lecture, nor so distinctively practical as the homily, but has the same combination of the didactic and the practical that any textual or topical sermon has or should have. It is a method that may have very wide range. It may involve doctrinal preaching, for it is likely to hit upon the fundamental teachings of Christianity. It may involve ethical preaching, for Biblical material is largely ethical. Its material may be biographical or historical. Much expository preaching is necessarily of this sort. It may be evangelistic in its character, involving exhortation and appeal, for its content may be the central message of the Gospel. It is used largely in the evangelistic preaching of our day. The possibilities of expository preaching as regards its range are a strong recommendation of it. It may combine many and varied elements of effective preaching.

II. Homiletic Peculiarities of Expository Preaching

All types of the topical sermon are treated in much the same way, but there are some distinctive features in the handling of the expository sermon that demand special attention. This may anticipate somewhat the discussion of formal homiletics, but only in a very limited measure.

As regards the text, unity of content demands special emphasis. The text is likely to be too large and cover too much ground. It is complex and varied in its content of thought. It is desirable, therefore, that it be reduced so that it may be made to contain but one complex leading thought or group of cognate or related thoughts capable of being gathered into one theme. If the text covers too much ground, the theme, if a theme be secured from it, will be too large, and the discussion, therefore, inadequate or interminable. If a single theme be

not found to cover the content, the discourse may lack unity. It will be a homily, not a sermon.

As regards the introduction, it is naturally briefer than that of the ordinary topical sermon. It enters less into explanation, for the whole sermon is explanatory. A long expository introduction to a sermon that is from beginning to end expository would be a gratuitous contribution. If the sermon is part of a series, the introduction will naturally aim to hold the continuity of exposition and will necessarily be brief, because it will only recapitulate the course of thought in the last discourse or possibly in the entire series up to this point.

As to the theme the demand is that in size it be neither too large nor too small to fit the content of thought discussed. The theme is likely to be too large, for the reason that there is likely to be a large amount of text behind it. It is difficult to state the theme of such a sermon, because it covers so much ground. The more care, therefore, is needed in the statement. On the other hand in reducing the theme one is likely to throw out important material that should be included in the discussion. Exceptional care in securing and stating the theme will aid in grouping the content of the passage, which lies in confusion before the mind of the hearer, about its central thought. The whole sermon will then open out before the hearer with the greater definiteness, and mental confusion will be avoided.

With respect to the topics or divisions of the sermon, care is needed in two directions; first in analyzing, sifting and selecting material for discussion, so as to secure and group only the chief, salient points of the passage; and secondly in fixing upon some simple, clear order in which these points or topics may be presented. Sometimes the passage itself will furnish the order that is desirable. It is likely, however, that the thoughts or topics will need rearranging.

Touching the development or expansion of topics, the suggestive, rather than the exhaustive method is needed. The

material is so abundant that it must be touched lightly, only the chief, germinal thoughts being seized upon.

It is hardly necessary to suggest that the conclusion can afford to be brief, and may well attach itself, as often in the preaching of Robertson, to the last topic discussed. An elaborate applicatory conclusion would be inappropriate in a discourse which is largely applicatory from beginning to end.

The expository sermon of the biographical and historical sort invites special attention. There are two possible methods of handling the material of such sermons. There is first the method of combining exposition and application in each division of the sermon. Here the application is attached directly to the exposition in the process of discussion. For such sermons this should seem to be the better way. One thus secures the greater clearness and definiteness of impression. One may thus take as text a single fragment that suggests what is most characteristic in the whole passage used, get a theme out of it and then discuss and apply the material as above suggested. To take a large passage would tax the memory in its effort to carry it along and keep connection. The second method separates the expository from the applicatory section, dealing first with explanation and then under a separate division deducing lessons or making practical application. This method seems better adapted to the doctrinal, than to the biographical or historical expository sermon. By discussing first the doctrinal material, one secures for it a clear, continuous and cumulative impression. Then one is ready to make a practical application of it. The hearer does not care to have the preacher stop in his discussion to moralize on his subject. He prefers a continuous, uninterrupted discussion. He is ready for the moral at the end. Not so, however, with the historical and biographical sermon. To be obliged to carry along the whole mass of biographical and historical material to the end of the exposition and then recall it all in the application would be too heavy a tax upon

the memory of the hearer. It would seem better to give the exposition in installments in connection with the application.

III. Qualifications for Effective Expository Preaching

The same general qualifications are of course needed in all types of effective preaching. But expository preaching has some special exactions. The following suggestions may be made.

1. Discriminating judgment is perhaps the primal requisite in successful expository preaching. This is taxed in the selection and use of material. A sense of proportion, of propriety, of fitness, of adaptation, is needed in determining just what should be selected for use, and just what and how much rejected. It is the germ thought, the gist of the passage that is wanted. One needs a firm grasp of the passage as a whole, a clear understanding of the central and most important thoughts and then good judgment in dealing with only that which is necessary to the realization of one's object in the sermon. If the exegetical dominates the homiletic mind, the preacher will surely fail to discriminate between what is important and what is unessential to his purpose. The exegetical mind is a very different product from the homiletical mind. The one is accustomed to minute analysis. It subjects all parts alike of a given passage to investigation. The other simply uses what is practically important. Skill is needed in homiletic analysis, then skill in combining the results synthetically. The first thing to do is to sift the elements of thought in the passage and then to select what one needs for homiletic use. Less skill in invention is needed here than in ordinary topical preaching, for the reason that the material in crude form lies near at hand in the text. But a great deal of skill in analysis is needed, skill in sifting out, selecting and ultimately in combining into unity the subject matter of the sermon.

2. Historical and literary sense also is a necessary gift for the expository preacher. One needs to cultivate the ability to

get behind a writer's language, to enter into his spirit, to make real to one's self the conditions of his thought, to get the flavor of what he says, to catch what is distinctive in it and to interpret him in a large and generous and suggestive way. In a word there is demanded the gift of the interpreter. No one has that gift who fails to see that the Bible must be studied as a literary product, just as any other book is studied, only more sympathetically and devoutly than any other book is entitled to be studied. It is very easy to foist one's own thought upon the writers of the Bible. Men of lively imagination, of nimble mental movement are very likely to do this. One must have care to bring out in a legitimate way what belongs to the writer, what he naturally suggests or what he furnishes as a natural basis for suggestion, rather than what is forced from him by some process of exegetical or homiletical twisting. A Biblical writer may prove suggestive far beyond his original intent, as any productive writer may. But far-fetched suggestions torture the historic sense. No type of preaching exacts so closely upon a well balanced judgment and upon a chastened taste, such as are inseparable from sound historic and literary sense. The attempt to modernize the Scriptures demands extreme care. Professional evangelists and preachers who are untrained thinkers are very likely to deal in crude anachronisms in their expository preaching, that is, they deal unhistorically with Scripture scenes and characters, which is to say that they handle them without good exegetical as well as homiletical sense, or without properly translating the Scriptures into and applying them to the real present. The applications are strained. The scenes and characters masquerade in grotesque guises. Mr. Moody, despite his strong common sense and clear judgment and quickness of insight, was sometimes led into such anachronisms. All this results from the lack of a trained historic and literary sense. One needs the ability to transfer oneself into other times, to get into the lives of the men of other

days, and to live them over with them. It demands also a knowledge of the people and the conditions of our time. Thus only may one successfully and correctly translate the past into the present. The Bible may be made a new book in the hands of a master of interpretation, like Frederick Robertson, who knows how to discover and to appropriate and apply its lessons to his own age. All this demands trained perception of historic analogies, so that one may interpret what is specific in history or experience by what is generic, or may interpret what is generic by what is specific.

3. Aptitude for moral ideas, *i. e.*, a trained facility in apprehending and applying truth with reference to ethical interests, is another valuable quality in the expository preacher. Preachers differ greatly in this regard. Some seem to have received the gift, and some have cultivated it more fully than others. Important as a homiletic gift in general, it is particularly so here. Scotch and Welsh preachers are preëminently gifted in this aptitude for moralizing. It is possible that the expository habit in preaching has developed the gift. They have cultivated the skill to interject practical, admonitory or edifying suggestions into their exposition. The Puritan preachers were trained in the exercise of this gift. It is susceptible of indefinite cultivation and will prove a valuable possession for any man who would be successful in this type of preaching.

4. Power of vigorous, concentrated statement may also be named as a valuable expository gift. The great amount of material at hand necessitates the gift of condensation. The expository preacher has an "embarrassment of riches." Success depends on condensation and concentration on what is of chief importance. Hence the value of the sermon form. With a well-conceived and well-stated theme, orderly plan, and careful method of development, one can realize to better advantage the requisite clearness and compactness of statement.

5. Facility in the handling of descriptive and narrative material is sure to have carrying power in the expository discourse. A great amount of this material is found in the Old Testament and this is one reason why it is so well adapted to and is so much used in this type of preaching. This facility is of special value in the historical and biographical discourse. The Scriptures in general strongly appeal to a picturesque and vivid literary style.

6. Candor in dealing with difficulties is an important ethical gift in this type of sermon. One is summoned to the exercise of candor in this as in no other sort of preaching, for the expositor is sure to meet difficulties which he cannot honestly evade. Caution, of course, is needed. A preacher should be wise in dealing with what honest and worthy, and intelligent people, although possibly uninstructed in the vexed problems of Biblical criticism, have regarded and do regard as sacred. There is in general no need in our day of scandalizing anybody in interpreting the modern view of the Bible, save the rather exceptional man, who is so dense in his ignorance and prejudice that he is incapable of illumination. But no special pleading is tolerable. The word of God should not be handled deceitfully but in such way as to commend it to every man's conscience, as well as intelligence, in the sight of God as well as of men. No hopeless dogmatic precommittals here, no minimizing of real difficulties, if also no parading of imaginary or relatively insignificant difficulties. This type of preaching tends to foster candor in the preacher, and this is a strong argument in its favor. It gives the preacher an opportunity to deal with Biblical difficulties, especially those of an ethical sort, in such way that the people will receive no shock. In no type of preaching can a man so well afford to deal with entire, but judicious frankness. Difficulties are taken up in a perfectly natural way and as a matter of course and are not dragged into or paraded in the sermon.

IV. The Value of Expository Preaching

1. He who cultivates it will be in line with much of the most effective preaching of other days. It may be justly claimed that it has been the prevailing type of preaching in the history of the Christian church. Doubtless to the theological or homiletic radical the antiquity of anything is no argument in its favor. But it is natural for a person of sound judgment to infer the value of expository preaching for the future from its value in the past. It is interesting to see that in fact modern Biblical investigation has turned the attention of preachers in this direction. Early Christianity was propagated by Biblical preaching. It rejected the dialectical and rhetorical methods of classical antiquity and won its victory without them. It needed new methods, methods that were its own. It is true that it developed a dialectic and rhetoric that were peculiar to itself, and that it ultimately appropriated them, as it appropriated a philosophy, from outside sources. But it won its first conquests by the power of the spirit that dwelt within it and was native to it, and by a subject matter that was its own, rather than by an imported subject matter or, what is specifically to the point in hand, by the form of its presentation. And it is a method, which, in its artlessness, has always proved effective in any new awakening of the religious life. We get back to Biblical sources and methods as to the ever-fresh fountains and streams of religious life and power. It is then that preaching strikes out for itself simpler and more direct methods and more in accord with the genius of Christianity. By far the larger part of Luther's and of Calvin's discourses are expository. In the Methodist revival of the eighteenth century the topical method was used by Wesley, who in this as otherwise followed customs that were common in the Anglican church. But this method was used successfully in the interpretation of the Biblical material of the topical

sermon, and the expository method itself became increasingly common. In the English revivals of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries this was largely the method by which they were furthered. The Puritan preachers were largely Biblical preachers, as were the non-conforming preachers of a subsequent day. Baxter was a notable example of a fruitful Biblical preacher. Scotch preachers have to a large extent followed the expository method. German preaching in its best periods has renewed its Biblical tone and form and today it is largely expository or textual. French Protestant preaching has adopted this method to a considerable extent and in its early period almost wholly, and that despite the fact that French preaching in general is more largely topical than British or German, for the reason that it has been more fully subject to rhetorical culture. Saurin, the greatest of French Protestant preachers, generally made the first division of his discourse expository, although his method would be called topical. In our own day, as in the past, we notice a tendency in periods of special religious awakening to a more Biblical basis for preaching, which has greatly enhanced its power.

2. In line with the preceding consideration, one may note that in fact it is an acceptable method. It is in harmony not only with the needs, but with the wishes of the people. It is in line with the Biblical study of our day and with increasing interest in Biblical literature. The preacher knows, or should know, more about the Bible in many respects than preachers have ever known before. He has a more comprehensive estimate of it, critical, historical, literary, ethical and theological and has, or should have, a more intelligent interest in the study of it. Sunday school instruction, which has largely displaced pastoral catechetics that was formerly based on the theology of the church, has done much in preparing the way among the people for Biblical preaching. The preacher may have therefore, the greater confidence in the willingness of the members

of his congregation to listen to it. Popular preachers like Dr. Joseph Parker have found that they can effectively reach men in this way, and in the presence of promiscuous assemblies have not been afraid to trust themselves to it. The career in New York City of preachers like Dr. William M. Taylor and Dr. John Hall, who have interested great congregations composed largely of men by a simple, straight-forward practical exposition and application of the teachings of the Bible, is noteworthy. All this indicates, and it is a very hopeful indication, that there is increasing interest in this wonderful book. If one will watch a congregation in its reception of the truth presented in an effective expository manner, he will see and he will be impressed anew with the fact that the Bible is a profoundly interesting book to people of average intelligence, and the preacher who has tested this will have the greater confidence in attempting to utilize the fact.

3. Another consideration is that it is a method which is in harmony with the preacher's primary function. The preacher is an interpreter of Biblical truth. Like all public speakers, he is indeed an advocate. But he is an interpreter before he is an advocate. One may interpret truth without expounding it Biblically. But in leaving the Scripture text and discussing the theme independently the preacher introduces a new factor into his work. He interprets indirectly and it may be meagrely. But let one make the Scripture passage the immediate basis of one's work and he will realize more immediately and more fully the interpreting function. It is well to oblige oneself, by the use of the expository method in a measure at least, to keep the interpreting function before the mind. It may be of advantage to the entire work of preaching by holding other forms more closely to the Biblical basis.

4. Its value for the work of religious instruction is entitled to special consideration. It yields an abundance of fresh and varied material. All advocates of it lay stress upon this point,

and all preachers who have tested it have found it to be true. It is an economical use of preaching force, for it necessitates a thorough contextual study of the Scriptures and thus furnishes a large amount of material for preaching ready at hand. No wonder Dr. Joseph Parker was so fertile a preacher. His preaching was simply the product of continual Biblical study. In possession of all this material, one has an immense advantage at the outset. Out of such study, sermons are easily produced. Recall individual sermons of Frederick Robertson, *e. g.,* Jacob's wrestling, from the book of Genesis, and God's Revelation of Heaven, and many others. It is questionable whether we should have had these sermons in their present richness, suggestiveness and helpfulness without the previous expository study that was given to the books from which they come. In fact all of Robertson's preaching seems to have been based on his Biblical studies. And this is one of the sources of his great helpfulness as a preacher. Moreover this type of preaching is likely to secure more correct teaching than the topical method. The material is likely to be more reliable as well as abundant and varied. No studious man in our day can preach expositorily to any considerable extent, or with much success, without making use of modern methods of Biblical investigation. That the results of this investigation give the preacher an opportunity and an incentive to ground his people in a better knowledge of the Bible, is a strong argument in favor of this method. One who preaches expositorily upon the books of the Bible will as of necessity discuss their distinctive characteristics. In this way the uninstructed will come to understand them better, and thus the more readily measure their value for the religious life. This must have been the result of such expository discourses as those of Dr. R. W. Dale on the Letter to the Ephesians and those of Robertson on the book of Genesis, the books of Samuel, the book of the Acts and the Epistles to the Corinthians. Thus the human side of the Bible

will emerge to view the more naturally and the divine side will be the more intelligently apprehended. One will be put upon the necessity of doing justice to the historic sense of the Scriptures and of educating one's congregation away from those false conceptions of them that are still prevalent. In this way, the Bible may become a more valuable book in the entire parish, for this sort of preaching will become tributary to the work of religious instruction in the home and in the Sunday School and in the catechetical class.

The teaching thus communicated is likely also to be the most weighty sort of teaching. It gets back to the fountain head of the Christian revelation. It is no product of subjective speculation. There is but very little doctrinal preaching in our day of any sort. But no topical preacher of the doctrinal type, even if we had him, could be as weightily instructive as the old New England doctrinal preacher in his day and according to his kind. That preaching was based on a well-defined system of doctrinal theology. It was after its sort doctrinally instructive. It did its work, in its way a grand work. From the basis of our present homiletic and theologic standards, it is easy to criticise it. Of course it would not succeed in our day. There is no call for just that sort of preaching. The modern didactic sermon in order to be successful most be rhetorically attractive. We no longer preach our systems of theology, even if we have them, and we should not preach them probably if we had them at hand more fully developed than we now have them. Preaching by suggestion rather than by elaboration best satisfies the modern congregation. But shallow, flippant criticism of our homiletic fathers is unseemly. That old doctrinal preaching was instructive in its way. The hearer was strongly indoctrinated. And in our day there may be a great loss in the instructive, edifying quality of our preaching, unless we find some substitute or supplemental method of conveying solid religious truth. Where shall we find it? It is the Bibli-

cal expository method that will do this work of instruction and to better purpose than the old doctrinal method. There is no reason why we should swing to the opposite extreme and decry doctrinal preaching in the distinctive sense. It is to be remembered also that in the presentation of Biblical truth in non-dogmatic form the results of one's study in doctrinal theology will appear and may well appear. But after all the Biblical, which is namely the non-dogmatic method of preaching, presents religious instruction in the best manner. Not only is the substance weighty but the form may be made attractive. It may lay the foundation for a better and more successful type of doctrinal preaching, a type that will be more fully in harmony with the tastes and culture of our time. Biblical science has become tributary to doctrinal theology, in fact has laid new foundations for it, and put it in line with present habits of thought. And just so a broader and a more correct expository and practical use of the Bible in the pulpit may lay the foundations for a better type of doctrinal preaching.

It is contained in what has already been said, that the Biblical type tends to secure for preaching in general a desirable objective quality. It will be not only more fresh and varied and more correct and weighty teaching, but it will be less exposed to the manifold defects of subjective caprice, or subjective speculation.* As preaching strays from a Biblical basis, it tends to subjectivity. It may become rationalistically subjective or mystically subjective or æsthetically subjective according to the preacher's prevailing tendency or the tendency of his time, or of the circle to which he belongs. The restoration of the Biblical quality involves a restoration of objective quality both in susbtance and form.

5. Its value to the religious life of the congregation commends it to our favor. The religious life can not grow unless

*See Prof. Shedd's Homiletics and Pastoral Theology. Chap. I, page 21; Chap. III, page 75 ff.

it is fed. It is Biblical pabulum, judiciously served, that is most wholesome and nutritious. In abandoning the Biblical type, preaching is likely to run into one-sidedness. It settles into ruts and it becomes unprofitable. In reaction it pushes from one extreme to another, all one-sided and ultimately unprofitable. This may be illustrated copiously. The Biblical method of the Reformation, for example, was abandoned for the dogmatic method of the post—Reformation, which was a survival and revival of the topical scholastic type. Then came a reaction against its unfruitfulness in favor of a mystical or pietistic, which was an extreme of the sentimental and emotional type of preaching. This too ran itself down and out into equal unfruitfulness. Now the interesting thing is that after these reactions, there is a return to Biblical preaching. The extremes of dogmatic and of pietistic sentimental preaching give place to the Biblical basis which is notable in our own day. Take as an illustration the preaching of the United States. The old doctrinal type had its run in New England. At one time there was almost nothing but doctrinal preaching of the topical or propositional type. Against the doctrines of this preaching and naturally against its method liberalism so-called reacted. As a result there emerged a type of preaching, modified in substance and form that was rationalistic and ethical. It had better literary quality. This rationalizing, ethical, æsthetic or literary quality has characterized the preaching of the so-called liberal churches ever since. Other influences, with which we need not linger, have been at work modifying American preaching, securing for it a more sympathetic, a more ethical, a better literary quality and greater rhetorical effectiveness. And now the thing to be noted is that, amid all these movements, we see a tendency back to the Biblical type which tends to check the one-sidedness and to correct the unprofitableness of any one dominant tendency. And it may be believed that all this indicates a rec-

ognition of the needs of the religious life of the churches. For the churches have always thriven on such preaching. It tends to check extremes and furnishes nutriment for the religious life. It is a type of preaching that furthers the interests of the worshipping assembly. The pulpit orator and the pulpit oration have their place. But for the ordinary Christian congregation a large amount of Biblical preaching, shaped indeed with reference to rhetorical effectiveness, but still Biblical in substance and method, will prove most helpful to the religious life.

6. But not the least important consideration is its value to the preacher himself. Take the case of Frederick Robertson as an illustration. Its value to him in a variety of ways is most notable, but especially in anchoring him to objective historic truth. By reason of his somewhat morbid and strongly subjective tendencies, thrown as he was into an age of dislodgment from the old foundations, he was in danger of a wreck of faith. No one can feel sure where he would have landed, if he had not been held by objective, historic, Biblical truth. His Biblical method of preaching may have secured him also from an extreme of the dialectical or dogmatic method, at least it may have been influential in arresting and checking such tendency. For it is noteworthy that Robertson was not only a man of very strong convictions, but of very resolute will and might easily have become a polemist. Moreover, he was a man of great dialectical ability and might have developed as much dialectical skill as Newman. If he had trained himself as an advocate of Church theology, he might have become a most powerful popular dogmatist and apologist, as much so as Robert South, and he might have become a bishop in the Anglican church! For he was by far the most powerful preacher the church of England produced in the last century. But he chose the better way, better for himself, better for his church, better for all who have felt his power, better for the

world, and he has left a more lasting influence than otherwise might have been possible. He chose the good part that never shall be taken away.

7. A final word should be spoken in behalf of its rhetorical effectiveness. Much expository preaching has doubtless lacked such effectiveness. But preachers like Robertson and Parker illustrate its rhetorical possibilities. The Biblical material of such preaching is rich in rhetorical and poetic suggestiveness. It must be concrete and illustrative preaching. What has been said about the rhetorical value of texts in general for the work of preaching, may be said with increased emphasis of the use of the Scriptures in expository preaching. The Bible deals with human life in its most intense reality. Preaching from such a book naturally cultivates the concrete habit of mind, and it will speak to the imagination and emotions. It deals with the human as well as the divine heart. Preaching that moves in such a realm will naturally be simple and practical and human, for its aim will be primarily to interpret the truth with reference to the interests of common human life. It does not call for great oratory. It calls for simple, clear, straight, vigorous, sometimes pungent, cumulative indeed, but plain, unartistic presentation, with reference to the interests of a purer, nobler, more intelligent indeed, but above all a more practical Christian life.

CHAPTER II

THE DOCTRINAL TYPE

I. The Conception of Doctrinal Preaching

There is in our day a strong reaction against what is known specifically as doctrinal preaching. To meet this prejudice and in the interest of effectiveness, it were well for us at the outset to secure a limit for our conception of it. We will limit it then to the presentation of those truths that are properly articles of a Christian creed.

Doctrinal preaching is the preaching of doctrine. Its material is doctrine, its object is to convince, its method is proof. But what are we to understand by doctrine as the term is used here? It is natural to think of it in the first place as a truth that does not stand by itself alone. It does not find its complete significance in itself. It is a related truth. It exists in organic connection with other truths. It is part of the system of Christian thought, which is evolved from the thought content of Christianity.

It is a truth, therefore, that is central and fundamental. It is its importance for Christian thought and life that fixes its place. Not every Christian truth may be elevated to the rank of a central and fundamental doctrine. The sort and size of the truth must be taken into account. A doctrine in the sense intended here is not secured by throwing any sort of relatively insignificant Christian thought into the form of a proposition. It is a truth selected on account of its importance from a large number of minor truths and lifted into prominence. It thus becomes a significant article of Christian faith. The doctrine

of the atonement, *e. g.*, is selected from a group of truths relating to the saving significance of Christ's work. A doctrine then, as understood in this discussion, embodies what is central and fundamental in Christianity and is of supreme interest for Christian faith and life. Such a truth is capable of being expressed in terms of rational thought. It can be formulated, provisionally at least. A doctrine is a truth, but not every truth is a doctrine. Any unformulated statement of Christian thought may contain a truth. Many of them perhaps. But the discussion of such a truth would not be doctrinal preaching in the sense intended here. A truth becomes a doctrine when it can be put into a complex proposition. The atonement for example may be a fact, or a truth or a doctrine. The fact is that the life and death of Christ had relation to human sin. It is a fact independently of any accurate or complete conception of its significance, or any formal statement of its rationale. It is Christ's work, it is God's work and is objectively valid independently of any theory of its validity. But to preach the fact of the atonement, simply as a fact, is not to preach the doctrine. The truth of the atonement belongs to our conception of the meaning of redemption and relates to Christ's living and dying as a redemptive provision. But this does not necessarily involve any formulated statement as to the method by which his sacrificial life and death become valid for our redemption. The doctrine properly deals with this question. It is a question of method, of the inner relation of the atonement to redemption, the rationale of its saving significance. The doctrine at any rate has, with whatever success, or lack of success, undertaken to answer this question. One may preach the fact or the truth, and it may not be necessary to formulate it into a doctrine and present it from the pulpit. It is generally regarded in our day as unnecessary. But it would seem to be desirable that an educated and intelligent Christian minister should be able to tell his hearers what is meant by the

saving significance of Christ's life and death, should be able to interpret its rational and moral value and should be able to furnish an intelligent basis for believing and accepting it. A doctrine then, as intended here, is a related, fundamental, formulated truth.

It is evident, therefore, that doctrinal preaching is something more and other than didactic preaching. All instructive preaching is didactic, whatever its subject matter or method of presentation. All helpful preachers are instructive but not necessarily doctrinal. There are but very few doctrinal preachers in our day. But no man would be worthy of his position who could not instruct his congregation. Even the preacher who aims chiefly at ethical and emotional incentive, in so far as he elucidates the truth, is at the same time a didactic preacher.

Neither is doctrinal identical with dogmatic preaching. The word dogmatic has a variety of meanings and is a little difficult to define. In general it suggests something authoritative. The proper and in theological circles the accepted meaning of dogma is the formulated statement of a doctrinal concensus. It bears the mark of some sort of agreement. And this, if nothing else, secures for it a certain note of authority. It may be the authority of ecclesiastical statute law. It may be the authority of what may be called common ecclesiastical law or the tacit agreement or consensus of those who belong to the same communion or church. It is an authority that may or may not be enforced. But in any case there is a certain suggestion of authority about it. It may only be rational or moral authority. But all who accept dogma are expected in a general way at least to adhere to it. They at any rate accept it "for substance of doctrine." Dogma then belongs to the doctrinal foundations of a church, sect or denomination. It is probably this notion of authority associated with the word, although it may be a very shadowy sort of authority, that, in this demo-

cratic age, makes it offensive. It may not be ecclesiastically enforced at all, and yet there lingers about it a certain note of positiveness, of assurance as of something that should be accepted, even if upon nothing more than rational and moral grounds. But there may be to some an offense even in this. Accordingly, when we speak of a dogmatic preacher, we generally mean one whose tone is rather more positive, or confident or authoritative than we like, as if he expected us to accept his teaching as a matter of course. But doctrinal preaching need not be dogmatic in tone in any offensive, over-authoritative sense. Surely it should not be regarded as offensively dogmatic because it is positive. Much less need it be dogmatic in the proper ecclesiastical sense of the term, *i. e.*, as containing the teaching that somehow bears the mark of church authority. For one may not fully accept the doctrinal standards of his church, may not accept them at all save upon the basis of most liberal construction, as is the case in all Protestant churches that still retain their doctrinal standards. Or one may minister to a church that has no enforced or enforceable standards, as in the Baptist or Congregational communions. Or one may accept the doctrinal statements of his theological school or teacher. Or he may formulate his own statements of doctrine. They need not bear the mark of ecclesiastical authority or even of church consensus. Doctrinal and dogmatic preaching may indeed be identical. And why should one object? It does not injure a doctrine, or render it less true or valuable or worthy of acceptance that it has been formally accepted by a church, and so become its dogma, provided its acceptance by its members is not enforced unconditionally or rather is not enforced at all ecclesiastically, or by the church as claiming to be a doctrinal authority. Why should one be afraid of the word dogma, so long as it stands for the right thing, and is used in the correct sense? But doctrinal preaching need not be dogmatic, even in this mild

sense. And in general it is better to discriminate between them.

Moreover, doctrinal preaching need not be rationalistic or speculative preaching. Elements of speculation doubtless must enter into all doctrinal preaching. To speculate is to examine, to investigate. It involves analysis, comparison, classification, arrangement of the data of a subject. Out of these data, analyzed, sifted, collected, classified, hypotheses, or provisional theories are formulated, *i. e.*, rational statements of the results of investigation. Then these provisional theories are put into relatively permanent form and they are ready for use. In our investigation of theologic truth we follow, or should follow substantially this method. In all this there is speculation. Even in presenting the results of investigation, and it is results that the preacher does present, whether by the inductive or deductive method, and the deductive is generally the preacher's method, and in presenting proofs and illustrations of the truth of the doctrine discussed, one enters measurably upon a speculative, a rationalizing process. In a word speculation is involved in all rational investigation. But this is not what we mean when we speak of speculative preaching. We mean that the preacher bases his teaching upon inadequate data, data of revelation, or of experience, or of fact, *i. e.*, he rationalizes or he theorizes too much, *i. e.*, his theories are not adequately verified. They are hypotheses. Too large an element of uncertainty is thus introduced into his work. In a word when we say that a preacher is too speculative, we mean that he is an un-Biblical rationalist or an irrational or visionary theorist, who has no respect for his data of facts. Such preaching is of course unreliable, as being based on too much unverified theorizing. But doctrinal preaching need not and should not be speculative in this objectionable sense. Preaching, of course, can never be infallible, could not be though based on an inerrant book. Any human statement of doctrine, though it

might have behind it the authority of an infallible book, or an infallible church, would have elements of imperfection, unless the teacher were himself infallible. Statements of doctrine can only be approximately correct, and need revision. But doctrines based on sound Biblical data, and supported by adequate arguments, *i. e.*, by appeal for verification to rational, ethical and spiritual experience, can not be called rationalistic or speculative in any objectionable sense. Nor can the preaching of such doctrines be speculative in any objectionable sense.

II. Methods of Doctrinal Preaching

The object of the sermon determines its method of treatment, or its class or type. In all preaching of this sort, the ultimate aim is the same. But in reaching this the immediate aim may vary. The immediate object may be simply to support the doctrine, assuming no opposition and no antagonist. Or the object may be to defend it, assuming that it is challenged and needs defense. Or the object may be to attack the contrasted error, and the antagonist who supports it, assuming the necessity of fighting down error in order to establish the truth. The ultimate aim is the same. It is to convince and persuade and thereby to establish truth and character in and by the truth. But the varying methods yield three types of doctrinal discourse. It gives us the sermon that is positive and declarative in method, one that is defensive and apologetic and one that is aggressive and polemical.

1. In the declarative method the aim is simply to interpret, and to support by interpretation, the doctrine discussed. It is an expository, not a defensive or belligerent task. It assumes that the doctrine is obscure in itself, or in its evidences and only needs interpretation, and the support thus furnished. It does not assume that the truth of it is generally challenged or doubted or denied, or if it does assume it, the assumption is

obscured. Of course there are Christian doctrines enough that are denied. But there are many that are simply ignored, or neglected or forgotten or if accepted at all accepted in a conventional, matter-of-course manner. To assume or to give credence to the assumption that people are spending their time and energy in fighting all the great truths of Christianity might put both hearer and preacher in an objectionably defensive or antagonistic or polemical temper of mind. There may be a certain strength in the assumption, or even in the seeming of the assumption, that they are not and can not be successfully contested. There may be apologetic value in ignoring such denial when it is known to exist. The doctrinal preacher should be adroit and skillful as well as sincere. It is especially important to recognize the fact that some important truths of Christianity are forgotten or neglected or ignored, rather than questioned, denied or rejected. People sometimes suppose themselves to reject what they simply ignore. In periods of religious controversy, doctrinal preaching will necessarily take the apologetic or polemic form. Too much of it has taken the latter form. But controversy subsides, and once contested truths fall into neglect. They are either accepted as a matter of orthodox course or are set aside as of no practical or theoretic significance or importance and become objects of indifference. Other truths come into discussion. This is the case in our own day. A large class of valuable Christian truths are simply ignored. There is no interest in them. It is these truths that may well be treated in the expository or declarative method. Their chief need, or men's chief need with respect to them is interpretation and evidence. Put before men in a positive, declarative manner, they may win the readier response and acceptance. There is no apologetic interest hostile to them, and when once their practical significance for the Christian life becomes clear, they may be the more easily welcomed. There is a large group of teachings centering

in the supremacy, priority and sovereignty of God, that were once prominent in theology and in preaching. These truths might well be resuscitated in new form. They might be presented as topics in Biblical theology and interpreted in the clearer light of present knowledge. The minds of people are no longer set against them in a controversial interest. Their value for the Christian life may easily be presented and made manifest and all this would prove favorable to their practical acceptance. There are a large number of Christian teachings that might well be presented in the same way. The doctrine of sacred Scripture or phases of the doctrine, the doctrine of future probation and future punishment might well be discussed in this way. If one permits himself to assume a manifest apologetic attitude in his investigation and discussion particularly of subjects about which there is a good deal of sensitiveness, he may easily become an advocate, when he should be only an interpreter. He will have a case to make out, rather than a truth to expound. The traditionalist easily becomes an adversary, and the apologist a polemist. A preacher of this sort may stir up and involve in difficulty about as many questions as he answers and may perplex about as many minds as he convinces. There is some basis for the claim that the defense of the great truths of Christianity may well be left not wholly of course, but to a considerable extent to the theological school and the religious press and that the pulpit may well give itself, not wholly of course, but largely, to the non-polemical, or even non-apologetic method of interpreting and inculcating them. And yet there is place and demand for apologetic preaching.

2. This brings us to the second method. The demand for apologetic preaching is involved in the broader question of the demand for Christian apology in general. Christianity has been, is and will be attacked. Should it be defended? And is a theory of defense needed? That is, is that branch of theology

known as apologetics needed? Is it of any value? There can hardly be a doubt as to the proper answer. Apologetics is a legitimate, a necessary branch of theology. The theological school at least needs it. But does the pulpit need it? It is sometimes assumed that it does not. Let the school and the press keep in hand the work of defense, but let the pulpit present the claims of Christianity in a positive, affirmative way; let it deal with the beneficent results of Christianity. This is all the defense needed from the pulpit. Christianity can make its own defense, if it is well presented and well exemplified. But if the pulpit does nothing more than point to the effects of Christianity it defends it. It is one of the most effective methods of apology. And the pulpit needs it. The world needs it. But it needs more. Let us, then, consider this more fully.

(1) Christianity has been attacked and it has been successfully defended. What might have been the result, without such defense is hardly uncertain. It would have been crushed out, as Protestantism was, or nearly so, in France. Controversy is often bad, but it is simply a historic necessity. The history of Christianity and of the church is largely one of controversy. Our Lord defended not only himself, but his teachings, and his teachings more vigorously than himself. The sermon on the mount is an apologetic discourse. It is a defense as well as exposition of his conception of the kingdom of God, as a kingdom of personal righteousness, in contrast with the conception of the conventional religionists of his day. The parables are apologetic, often polemical. They stung the Pharisees to the quick, because they saw and felt that they were attacked, and they set themselves against him. They are a most adroit, truly oriental and mightily effective method of defense and attack. The Apostles defended not only themselves but their teachings and their religion. Against heathenism they defended their

religion. Against Judaism they defended their peculiar teachings. Paul had and defended what he called "My Gospel." In the Roman and Galatian letters, he defends Christianity as a universal religion against Judaism, a religion of narrow particularism, of external legal ceremony and of special privilege. In the Ephesian and Colossian letters he defends a spiritual universalism against materialistic speculations that would limit and degrade it. In the Corinthian letters he defends not only his apostolic calling, but important Christian teachings, like the Resurrection, that had been assailed. The letter to the Hebrews is an apology, a defense of Christian universalism. Christianity is Judaism completed, sublimated in the form of a universal and absolute spiritual religion. The prescriptions of the pastoral epistles are apologetic, largely polemical. There is a quasi-apologetic element even in the Gospels. They are each adjusted to some interest in a semi-apologetic manner. The "tendenz" theory as applied to the book of the Acts is not without basis. It is an advocacy of Pauline Christianity. It intends to magnify it. The work of the post-Apostolic church was largely apologetic. It carried on the defense, which the Apostolic church had begun against Judaism on the one side and heathenism on the other. The medieval church defended Christianity with scholastic weapons and the scholastic awakening was, in the church, largely an awakening to the rational defense of its Christianity. The Reformation period was one not only of apology but of polemic. The post-Reformation in its defense recalled once more the scholastic method and with modifications it held its own for more than two centuries. It strongly influenced the preaching of English and Scotch Protestantism and reached on even into the last century in the preaching of New England. Recall the controversies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and of the American churches in the early part of the nineteenth.

We have our apology today, but of a greatly modified char-

acter. And we have our science of Apologetics. It is sometimes treated as a branch of dogmatic theology, and properly. Thus largely in the United States. It enters into historic theology and necessarily. And sometimes it is a branch of practical theology. Thus in Scotland. Here Apologetics is brought into connection with homiletics. Apology is assumed as necessary for the work of preaching. No preacher is properly trained for the pulpit who is not trained in apology. This may be overdone. Perhaps it has been. But the basis of the assumption is correct. That the science of Apologetics is thus assigned to different branches of theology may suggest its significance. But the point in hand is that as Christianity has been and must have been defended, so will it and must it be in the future.

(2) The conditions of our own age accentuate the demand for apologetic preaching. Consider, for example, the character of American life. It has all the faults and is exposed to all the dangers of an extreme democratic life. Speech is free, libidinously and anarchistically free. The press is free, often vulgarly and vilely free. Attacks on religion are freely bruited about and popularized. The American people are a reading people, and everybody knows the latest scepticism and heathenism. The same conditions may exist in other countries, but hardly to the same extent, and the relation of the pulpit to the general public is somewhat different in this country. Now, how shall the democratizing of criticism and scepticism and negation be counterworked, if not by the pulpit?

Consider also the insidious character of this spirit of negation. The prevailing naturalism of our day is almost effusively religious in its tone. It is sentimental, rather than scornful, as it was in the eighteenth century. It wishes to be regarded as preëminently the friend of genuine Christianity, *i. e.*, the Christianity which it regards as in harmony with the

culture of the age. It simply wishes to relieve it of its surplus beliefs, which are assumed to be stumbling blocks in men's way. They are external to Christianity, have grown with its later development and do not belong to the original stock. No man can deny the sincerity of this naturalistic spirit, nor question the genuine religious character of many of its subjects. The various forms of rationalism claim to be preëminently patrons of a rational, intelligent and intelligible Christianity, such as the progress of the age demands.

Agnosticism would have us understand that it exercises preeminently the virtues of religious modesty and reverence and truthfulness, and self poise. It magnifies the importance of a religion that respects verifiable facts and is satisfied only with verifiable truth. It is the critic and sworn enemy of all rashness and immodesty in the concerns of religion.

Pantheism is devout and human and æsthetic, even if nonmoral. Even atheism has a respectful tone and habit and finds a place for subjective religion. It develops reverence for humanity and it sentimentally worships "our Father man." This insidious character, as it may be called, however unconscious of deceit, should be recognized, and it should be met by a type of apologetics that will adjust itself to its methods and skillfully counter-work it.

Consider further the somewhat concessive tendency of those who would be regarded as liberal-minded men towards the critical and disintegrating temper of our time. Men affect broad views of religious and theological questions. They are inclined, therefore, to make generous and liberal concessions to the agnostic and destructive spirit and they are likely to over-do it. Concessions, of course, must be made, for criticism has scored many important points. But there is a limit. And the fact that we are obliged to concede so much may well put us on our guard, lest we give away our whole case. We need bracing. We must make concessions to naturalism, but

we may and should do it without giving away our supernaturalism. Naturalism begins with a high assumption, the assumption of the impossibility or rather of the unbelievable possibility of miracles. But why may not the supernaturalist have his assumption? Sober-minded, scientific and philosophical thinkers among naturalists concede in fact that, from the theistic point of view, miracles are not antecedently impossible but are even easily thinkable. Why then may not the Christian theist assume, and reasonably, that as related to the unique personality of Jesus Christ, miracles are antecedently probable and are certainly easily thinkable. The Christian theist surely has as much ground for his assumption of probability as the agnostic for his concession of possibility.

Consider, moreover, the needs of the practical life of the church in our day. Without positive preaching the church will suffer, and a careless habit of mind with respect to the grounds of Christian belief and the basis of defense for Christianity will inevitably appear in a lack of positive preaching. Such preaching will be over-concessive. It will leave the impression of a *laissez faire* habit of mind and of general uncertainty about vital questions. And who can doubt the result of this upon the practical life of the church, and especially upon its missionary interests. An era of general unsettlement and of uncertainty with respect to the great facts and truths of Christianity would be sure to result in a serious loss of missionary life. Conceptions and statements of truth of course change. Apologetic methods change, and there can be no doubt that the missionary work of the church calls for a better apologetic than any to which it has entrusted itself in times past. But no apologetic at all means failure of missionary life. No man needs so good an apologetic, particularly so good a theodicy as a missionary. A large part of his work must be apologetic as related to the difficulties and objections that are brought against the religion he advocates. But the church at home as

well as the missionary at the front needs a positive tone in the preacher for the bracing of its practical life.

3. In defending the truth, or what is regarded as such, it is sometimes necessary to attack the opposing error. By exposing the falseness of its opposite the truth may be seen in a clearer light and its value may be enhanced by disclosing the mischievous character of error. There is a place, therefore, for the polemic and in a modified form even for the philippic in the pulpit. It is conceivable that a time might come when there would be demanded a vigorous onset upon the grosser forms of error, intellectual as well as moral. If one were to attempt it, he would better make thorough work of it. But it should be rarely attempted. There has been too much polemical preaching and of the bad-tempered sort. It may have been of some value, but it has done much harm and the evil as well as good results remain. One may indeed preach polemically in a generous, manly and even thoroughly gracious manner, and if we are to have it at all, this is the sort needed. But we best meet the temper of our time by the non-polemic habit. The attitude of opponents in our day is genial. The respectable critic cherishes the non-polemical temper. A man like Robert Ingersoll is exceptional. He is an anachronism. He belongs to the vulgar crowd of scoffers common in the eighteenth century. Violent and vulgar attacks are not the fashion. The tone is patronizing rather than polemical. The preacher should adjust himself to this temper and tone.

Moreover the spirit of the church is in general hostile to this method. It is catholic and tolerant in so far as it is intelligent and the impression is widely prevalent that polemical preaching fails to realize its object. Men are inclined to look for the truth that lurks behind error, far more so than was once the case. The best modern preaching follows this method.

But the chief objection against polemical preaching is that it

is likely to be unjust. One becomes an advocate who has a case to make out, and ceases to be a reliable interpreter. The advocate easily becomes the special pleader. He is identified with his case. The opponent easily becomes a personal enemy. He is identified with the error he advocates. It is the more important therefore, by all legitimate and even illegitimate means, to make out a case against him. In such condition of mind fair treatment is impossible. No one can do justice to what he regards as an error, if he has no care to get at the truth that lurks behind it. No one can do justice to an opponent, if he has no care to get his point of view and no moral ability or perhaps only a crippled mental ability to interpret what the opponent is trying to express. The polemist is likely to make a personal matter of his advocacy. It is his cause quite as much as the cause of truth. Hence originate arrogance and ill temper. The very word has become suggestive of the fighting spirit and of bad temper. It is a battle, it is a war, in which this defender of the faith is engaged, not of truth with error, but between two men or two parties. The influence on the men and hardly less on the cause of truth is bad.

III. The Importance of Doctrinal Preaching

Its importance as a type of homiletic product may be considered from three points of view, those of substance, form and tone.

1. The value of doctrinal preaching as related to its subject matter.

(1) Consider its apologetic value, its value in getting the important truths and facts of Christianity definitely before the minds of men. It clears up difficulties. It is said that men know more about Christianity than they are willing to appropriate and apply. This is measurably true. Moral rather than mental perversity often blocks their way to the light. But if

this dictum implies or is meant to imply that those who reject Christianity always have adequately clear conceptions of it and do not need to know more about it in order to act intelligently with respect to it, it is false. The fact is that the great realities of Christianity are often invested with much obscurity. A well-defined conception and clear statement of them and of the evidence on which they rest, are none too common, even among intelligent and educated people of virtuous and honorable lives. It is not unlikely that a minister may, without being aware of it, be surrounded by those who are silently perplexed by difficulties that may result from wrong or inadequate conceptions of Christianity. They reject it, or at least many of its truths, because they, like the late Professor Huxley, have found no satisfactory way of meeting their difficulties. Preachers in our day have to deal with people who do not know Christianity adequately. Wrong statements of truth may be responsible for this. A wrong statement of a truth or fact that it declared to be fundamental may work immense harm. Much of a preacher's work, and perhaps more in our day than ever before, consists in removing difficulties of various sorts that block or are assumed to block men's way into God's Kingdom. Among these difficulties inadequate or perverted conceptions of Christian truth may be most serious in their consequences. The value to a preacher in such a day as this of a good apologetic method, especially the value of a good theodicy, the value of a worthy conception and statement of doctrines that are held to be fundamental, can not be overestimated. The need of familiarity with the mental perplexities of men and of a training that will fit one to meet these perplexities is also obvious.

Doctrinal preaching also aids men in discriminating between what is primary and what is secondary in Christian truth. It will expound what is primary and will show men how to estimate at its true value what is secondary. And so when theo-

logical discussions arise in the churches, as they have arisen and will again, and when men are likely to be thrown into a panic, those who are grounded in what is primary and fundamental will be able to estimate the significance of the discussion and will know how to judge its important features. Much doctrinal preaching in days past has failed to discriminate between what is primary and what is secondary or even to recognize the existence of such a distinction. Relatively unimportant doctrines have been thrust into the foreground and magnified as of fundamental importance, upon which salvation itself may depend. Preaching based on controversial creeds is quite likely thus to err. The controversial creed lacks theological perspective. Preaching based on such creeds has a like disturbance of balance. Hence the value of creeds that belong to non-polemical periods or that have been sifted and revised and made more catholic in substance and tone. Such creeds will summarize the primary articles of the Christian faith. It is a desirable thing for the preacher to study such formularies with reference to pulpit discussion.

Such preaching begets confidence in the reasonableness of Christianity. It will, at least, aim at this, and if intelligent preaching, it will realize its aim. Rationality is not rationalism. Rationality becomes rationalism, and the rational becomes the rationalistic only by a one-sided use of reason. A broadly rational estimate of Christianity will take into account its adaptation to the whole complex nature of man, not to his intelligence alone. It will find its verification and vindication not merely in the conceptual or speculative understanding, but in the moral and religious nature as well. The word reason covers more ground and has a fuller content than it once had. But religion must commend itself to intelligence as such. Otherwise it will not win acceptance. Intelligence has been active in the domain of religion for many centuries. Doctrinal preaching will respect the results of such activity in religious

investigation. It assumes that human intelligence may venture to deal with the facts of revelation and of religious experience and bring back valid results. It assumes that what commends itself to moral and religious manhood will somehow become domesticated in intelligence, and that what commends itself to sound mental judgment will also commend itself to the heart and conscience and win assent. Science is as important in the domain of religion as in any sphere where thought is active. It has secured results that are of great value to the church, and for a minister to cherish and express contempt for the science with which his profession deals is distinctly discreditable to his intelligence and his moral manhood. It is a mark of ignorance or perversity or both and is a bad habit. Of course, the sphere of truth is vastly larger than the sphere of doctrine. No statement of doctrine can be final. But doctrine has its place in the pulpit, defective though its statements may be.

(2) Note its indirect value for purposes of strong impression as well as definite instruction. It deals with a quality of teaching that edifies, enriches and ennobles character. It grapples with vital questions. They are the bottom questions on which a religion that claims to be absolute and universal rests. We are exalted and ennobled by that which is above us. It is the great truth that greatens both preacher and hearer. No man can get into a realm so large and wealthy without being enlarged and enriched by it. It intensifies and expands one's mental activities. It quickens the imagination. It stirs and enriches the emotional life. We are in the habit of sneering at scholasticism. But with all its defects it gave preaching a new and strong impulse. The pulpit needed a new instrument. It found it in scholastic logic and it has had a very powerful influence in various ways upon the preaching of the church. It has been a very productive type of preaching and has been wide in its scope. Puritan preaching, as a

survival of the scholastic method, was doubtless rhetorically defective. But in its way it was powerful preaching. Whatever else may be said about it, it was not weak. It handled great themes, and its processes of reasoning were close and cogent. No one can even read the product without being strongly impressed by it. A large theme always opens deeply and broadly in the hands of a strong and well-trained man. It is inexhaustible. The capacity of such a theme for inference or deduction is evidence of its productiveness. Much remains to be said after the main discussion is ended. The richest practical suggestions are secured by tracing the bearings of a great Christian truth and it is precisely the opening up of this truth in its doctrinal aspects that adequately discloses the practical lines along which it runs. The preacher who enters this field with the best results of modern training and who applies the modern homiletic methods will find his whole manhood enriched.

Moreover, it is this type of preaching that furnishes a basis for effective ethical preaching. No complete system of Christian ethics is possible in entire independence of Christian dogmatics. Christian doctrine furnishes a basis for fully developed Christian ethics. In like manner doctrinal preaching furnishes a basis for the best sort of ethical preaching of the Christian type. How can one present effectively any duty or any virtue or any law or any supreme aim of life in entire independence of the fundamental truth or teaching or principle on which it rests? When we speak of a moral life from the Christian point of view, whether as related to the supreme aim of that life as its highest good, or to its governing law, or to its duties, or to its virtues, we pre-suppose the revelation of Christ as related to those factors in our conception of a Christian moral life. And the first thing to do is to find out what that revelation is, *i. e.,* what its doctrinal concepts are, its doctrinal content. Christianity is a revelation of facts and truths

that have practical relations and applications. But in order to apply them we must first know them. They must be investigated as teachings provisionally at least, before they can be adequately conceived and stated in their ethical form, as involving a supreme ethical good or a supreme ethical law or as containing ethical duties and virtues, and before they can be applied in the most thorough way to character and conduct. Consider for example the doctrinal and ethical aspects of the atonement. How can one know in the fullest sense the moral claims of the atonement without knowing measurably well at least what the atonement is? And how can this be known without doctrinal investigation?

2. Consider the value of doctrinal preaching as related to its form.

Doctrinal preaching must be preëminently methodical preaching. One must state his truth clearly and exactly, illustrate it convincingly as well as persuasively, argue it cogently, and conduct the work of proof in an orderly manner. Its success depends on the clearness, exactness and orderliness of method from beginning to end, upon its unity, proportion and progress. Everything in its place and the whole thing must move on to a measurably successful, if not victorious issue, or collapse in humiliating defeat. Other sermons may have a certain sort or measure of success, though they come through chaos. But this must be organized and the builder must be able to look upon his finished work and behold that it is "very good." No one reasons well who reasons ramblingly. A preacher of powerful imagination may set logic at defiance, but his vocation is not in the sphere of doctrinal teaching. He who undertakes to set a great truth before the mind, lay bare its foundations, trace it in its relations of thought, clear up its obscurities and leave a well defined conception of its greatness and of its reality must do it methodically.

But doctrinal preaching has significance for rhetorical as

well as structural form. I venture the suggestion that it demands and tends to the culture of three important qualities of rhetorical style in the preacher, precision, clearness and force. As regards clearness and precision the case is evident at once. The character and object of the sermon exact preëminently upon these qualities. There are sermons, indeed, of a rhetorical character that do not and need not and perhaps can not be marked by a scientific precision of statement. They are precise enough suggestively to answer the purpose. They are clear without being intellectually exact. They are what we call suggestive sermons. Such sermons are, of course, desirable. The largest part of one's preaching may well be of this sort. It is quickening and helpful preaching. But a preacher may well aspire to do more and other than this. It is questionable whether it is well to preach nothing but rhetorically suggestive sermons. It is in fact a bad thing to overwork one's rhetoric. The understanding, the logical faculties, need cultivating for the work of the pulpit, and intellectual clearness and precision are the qualities that result.

As regards vigor the case may not at first be quite so manifest. But it is possible that clearness and precision may be associated with force and tributary to it. If one states the truth clearly and discriminatingly, he is likely to state it strongly. Men without notable rhetorical power have often spoken with great effectiveness. There is cogency in clear-cut statements. The preaching of John Calvin in a way illustrated this. If the truth grips the mental energies of a preacher, it is pretty sure to stir some emotional interest and this will give energy to one's utterance. One may, indeed, have a mental, and even an emotional interest in the truth of a sort, which may not involve a moral and religious interest in it, and consequently the expression may lack moral and religious cogency. But it is in general difficult to see how one is going to get the best ethical and religious interest in the truth and

in its effects, without an emotional interest. And how is one going to get the best and most permanent emotional interest without an intellectual interest? And when one has an ethical and religious interest which involves also an emotional and mental interest one is likely to get a combination of clear-cut, exact and cogent speech. It is this combination that is important for intelligent minds. A strong character can not be interested in the truth without being intellectually interested. The non-masculine minds in the congregation should, of course, not be neglected. They have their claims on the preacher. But the masculine mind must be satisfied, and this is the mind that is interested in discussion. If such a mind is carried into a state of mental and emotional interest by a clear and vigorous discussion of a great truth, it will be the more likely to be carried on and over into moral and religious responsiveness to it.

Who can even read Canon Mozley's sermon on "The Reversal of Human Judgment," without experiencing this combination of mental, emotional and moral excitement? Let one stop and analyze the effect and he will see how dependent the emotional and ethical impression is on the mental. And he will also find that all these impressions are dependent on qualities in the expression of the thought, which disclose the energies of the preacher's personality, *e. g.,* precision, clearness, terseness and energy of statement. The sermon that handles in appropriate rhetorical form a great truth will move strongly on, and will grow as it moves with ever-increasing moral momentum.

3. Doctrinal preaching has relation to the question of tone. By tone in preaching, we generally mean harmony between its quality of thought or sentiment and its quality of form, or between the rhetorical quality of the text and the discussion. But in this type of sermon it may receive a more specific application. It may suggest harmony between the strong qualities

of the subject matter and the qualities of the style in which it is presented. It may suggest a clear, strong, resonant, manly tone of utterance. The pulpit that has no such tone is, to use Cranmer's expression "the bell that has lost its clapper." It strikes no full, strong note. There are, indeed, minor notes in preaching, notes of gentleness, pathos and delicacy of sentiment, appropriate to the more gracious and delicate forms of revelation, that need cultivation. Many of the truths and facts of the Gospel do not call for the masculine tone in the preacher. Preaching should be persuasive as well as strong. But the type of preaching in discussion must be masculine. It must be robust and virile in its intelligence and moral tonicity. To grapple with a great truth, to discuss it discriminately, to support it valiantly against all comers, or even to interpret it non-apologetically and non-polemically, to carry it up, in whatever manner, to the crown heights of victorious argument—this develops manly strength. This sort of preaching has rallied and developed strong men. Even an ordinary man will grow in the process. Doubtless the apologetic value of much of the argumentative preaching of the church has been overestimated. But as to its value to the preacher as mental gymnastics there can be no doubt. It may not always convince or persuade. This depends on its method and temper and tone. But it must at least command the mental respect of men. This has given us a virile Christianity in the pulpit. We are greatly indebted to the manly men who have pushed Christianity through their strong and virile minds, and have brought it out in bold strong forms. And the men who after them have undertaken to handle these truths have in like manner found themselves greatened in mental power and trained in mental skill. Think of Paul and Augustine, and Calvin and Edwards, and other great thinkers of the Church. Their work was not final, nor without grave defects. Much of it will not stand. But they developed the

masculine side of Christianity. The preacher of our day should remember that Christianity must rally and find scope for the mental energies of men or in an age of light and knowledge it will be ignored or rejected.

I direct attention to a work entitled "The Decay of Modern Preaching," by Prof. Mahaffey.* I do not agree with much that the author says, nor do I commend the somewhat dogmatic or over-confident and assertive manner of his utterances. The very title of the book is in my judgment a misnomer, and involves an ungrounded assumption. It is too sweeping. But some things said by the author, although they may be extreme statements, are at any rate worthy of serious consideration. He says:† "If in such a time (as the present) a preacher avoids dogma, he is not likely to produce any permanent effect." Again;‡ "The world has been reformed not by preaching morals, but by preaching dogma."

"What converted the world was not the example of Christ's life, but the dogma of his death. His divinity and the atonement formed the real substance of early Christian preaching." These are doubtless extreme statements. What the author says is not true in the formal sense of the earliest type of Christian preaching. His conception of dogma is defective, and what he says of dogma in the sense in which he understands it is not strictly true. But it must be acknowledged that there is a solid basis of truth in his estimate of the value for the pulpit of the formulated teachings of Christianity. It has been rightly claimed that it is the didactic quality that largely distinguishes Christianity from other religions. It is a religion that can be taught, that can be preached. It is not primarily a teaching, but teaching is inseparable from it and distinguishes it. It is the religion that has produced a church and

*The Decay of Modern Preaching.

†Page 79.

‡Page 116.

a teaching ministry, and it has put an intelligent and intelligible and communicable content of religious thought into the hands of its ministers to be proclaimed to the intelligence as well as conscience and heart of the world. Other religions, of course, have their teachings and their teachers. But in the importance attaching to the truth and to the teachers of truth Christianity is far in advance of them. And it is this that differentiates pulpit from secular oratory to a large extent. All popular public speech has an expository basis. It aims to convince and it ultimates in persuasion. What distinguishes the speech of the Christian pulpit is the fact that its basis is more essentially didactic. Christianity is taught in the form of doctrine. In a time when all branches of knowledge are in process of development, the preacher should be able to grapple with a subject matter that belongs substantively to his profession and should be able to handle it with skill and force. The preacher who does this will hold the respect of the community and will make Christianity respectable in the eyes of thinking men. "We are elevated by that which is above us," says Jean Paul Richter, referring to that type of preaching in which the great truths of religion are presented to men.

IV. The Handling of the Doctrinal Sermon

The decline of doctrinal preaching is not wholly due to a decline of interest and of faith in doctrinal theology, or to changes in theological belief, although this in part. It is due also to the difficulty of handling it successfully. There is a good deal of popular prejudice against it, due measurably perhaps to the uninteresting character of such preaching in times past, and the tastes of the people are not in line with it. The preacher therefore, although he would willingly do it, dreads to venture upon so difficult a task. Moreover it is not an easy sort of sermon to handle at any time and under the most favorable conditions.

It is not my purpose, however, to undertake to show how this difficult task may be made easy. That were impossible. But I would like to suggest some simple and more or less familiar considerations which the preacher in our day may well take into account in his effort to present doctrinally the great truths of Christianity to his people. And these considerations relate both to substance and form.

1. With respect to its thought-material, the doctrinal sermon will be distinctively Christian. It is, indeed, admissible to present from the Christian pulpit the doctrines of so-called natural religion like the being of God and the immortality of the soul. There may in fact be an advantage in discussing from the basis of the testimony of the reason and moral and religious sense of men doctrines that find response even in our perverted human nature. It is important to know what may be said for these great truths from a basis that is independent of their Christian evidences and of the Christian forms in which they appear. But is it not on the whole better to undertake to show how Christianity, in its presentaion of these truths interprets all best witnessing of our nature and in fact completes and perfects both the doctrines and the evidences for them? This at least would seem to be the more appropriate for the Christian pulpit. Is it not easier to show that Christianity is natural, than to show that nature is Christian? This, moreover, is in harmony with the spirit and method of our day. Christian thinkers do not attempt to draw a hard and fast line between natural and revealed religion. It seems better, therefore, for the pulpit to approach natural religion through Christianity.

The teaching of the doctrinal sermon, if it is to be successful, will also be in harmony with what is best in the thinking of our time and with its assured results. Such preaching will be positive in its quality of thought. It will seek to find the important working truth that any statement of doctrine repre-

sents. It will recognize what is good and true and of practical worth in the theology and the polity of different sects, will seek and lay stress upon points of agreement, and will look towards a possible basis of coöperation. The preacher who defends the theology and the polity of his church in the positive, affirmative, rather than in the polemical manner, will show himself to be in sympathy with the spirit of his age. The sectarian polemist is discredited. The preacher who is more of an advocate than of an interpreter, who makes the impression that his chief aim is to make out his case, will part company with his congregation, if it be an intelligent Christian congregation.

A reasonable adjustment to theological changes is especially needed in any type of successful doctrinal preaching in our day. In some Christian communions there has ceased to be a correspondence between modern preaching, and even between the best type of preaching in these same communions, and the substance of the creeds to which they still nominally hold. When the theoretic and practical aspects of Christian theology are out of harmony it is always the practical aspect that ultimately carries the day. The theological thinking of our day is strongly influenced by the realities of life, and the doctrinal preaching that touches the realm of life will freely adjust itself to this habit of thought. The pulpit is summoned to appropriate the historic method in dealing with the person of Christ, and to a large extent it has heeded the summons. Following this method from the point of departure of his humanity and the perfection of his human character, the intelligent preacher will build up his conception of Christ's unique personality.

In the apologetic presentation of the alleged miraculous elements in Christianity due allowance will be made for modern and more correct views of the relation of the realm of the natural to the realm of the supernatural, for critical difficulties in the records of the miracles and for the difference between

the New and Old Testament points of view in their general estimate of miracles.

In the defense of supernatural Christianity in its broadest and most comprehensive aspects, the doctrinal preacher will not be afraid of critical, historical tests. He will give full weight to the importance of thorough critical and historical investigation into all the phenomena of what calls itself supernatural Christianity, as the best modern apologists, like Prof. Bruce, have done. Nor will he shrink from assigning to the sphere of nature what clearly belongs there any more than he will shrink from exalting to the sphere above nature what can render a no less worthy account of itself.

In discussing eschatological questions doctrinal preaching will adjust itself to the spirit of moderation and reserve that marks the modern method of investigation of these problems, to our better knowledge of the significance of eschatological Scriptures, to our more rational and realistic conceptions of punishment, and to the larger and more humanitarian sympathies and tastes that characterize our time, and that involve an intensified sense of the misery and bondage as well as guilt of human sin. But the preacher of strong ethical mind will wish to assure himself that these considerations are in harmony with just and serious views of the guilt of sin and with the true moral welfare of men.

The practical moral bearings of the facts and truths of Christianity, as contrasted with the results of the teachings of its opponents, will naturally be dealt with by the skillful Christian apologist. The uplift that supernaturalism has given the world, as contrasted with the nervelessness of the crass naturalism and materialism of modern life, has immense apologetic value, whose significance the preacher cannot afford to minimize. What the supernaturalism of Christianity has wrought in all departments of thought and life and what might be the effect, or what might have been, upon the world, upon

its art, upon its literature, especially upon its poetry and upon its religion, of a complete loss of faith in this higher element in Christianity—all this is of value to the preacher who would rally and support the faith of his people.

The relation of Christianity to the broader view of the world, to those conceptions of an illimitable and vastly flexible spiritual universe, that are the heritage of our age, is an aspect of modern apology which no preacher can afford to ignore. In the presence of such a universe and with it as the native country of the human spirit how petty and insignificant seems that view of human life that would regard it as a closed sphere, a little existence shut up within itself and with no touching-points with the vast illimitable of a supernatural sphere!

2. As regards the homiletic form of the doctrinal sermon, it is clear first of all that no type of sermon demands more care in the choice of texts. A New Testament text is needed for a New Testament doctrine. The New Testament interprets the Old. The Old interprets the New, but not adequately. Reading New Testament doctrines into Old Testament Scriptures has been one of the serious defects of doctrinal preaching. The text may well contain explicitly the germ of the doctrine discussed. There are types of didactic preaching, as already intimated, that may well use their texts suggestively. But this type of didactic discourse should rest upon the exact thought of the text or at least should not be deduced by any remote, inferential process. It is one of the homiletic sins of this type of preaching that it has abused texts by using them without a legitimate basis for the doctrine discussed.

The introduction will naturally be explanatory, or will give itself to the task of relating text to theme or of bringing text and context up into manifest connection with the theme and so justifying it. If it starts with a general thought or from some phase of the general subject, it will naturally run into and through the text in reaching the theme.

It is presupposed that the preacher will follow the deductive method. In his investigation and preparation he may have followed the inductive method. But he must reverse this in the pulpit. One cannot spend time to reproduce his process of investigation in the pulpit. He deals with results and his process is rather the unfolding than the infolding process. The theme, therefore, will be a statement of the subject in hand and whether in propositional or in rhetorical form will depend upon the method of the discussion.

The plan of the sermon consists of the arguments that support the thesis. The chief logical interest is the weight and cogency of the arguments. The chief rhetorical interest is the order of their presentation. No type of sermon demands such clearness and precision of statement and such orderly arrangement.

The development will depend upon the character of the topics or upon the method of argument. It may be abstract or concrete according to the method pursued in the presentation of proofs. If one looks for rhetorical effectiveness in his discussion, his development will be concrete and illustrative and so the more persuasive if not the more convincing. It is not the habit of preachers in our day to handle abstract topics in processes of argument.

The conclusion will naturally recapitulate, and will then deal with the ethical enforcement of the truth of the discussion, which will come in the form of inferences, ending perhaps with appeal.

Thus the object of the doctrinal sermon gives us the scope of the demand. The object will be first to state and interpret the doctrine, assuming, as one must, that the preacher will generally follow the deductive method. Secondly, to present the evidences of its truth, by whatever method of proof. These methods of proof will necessarily vary with the character of the doctrine presented, with the character of the audience,

and with the method of handling the sermon. Thirdly, to illustrate it. Fourthly, to enforce it, *i. e.*, to inculcate those practical duties and interests that are involved in the ethical aspects of the truth in hand. First, a clear apprehension and clear statement as to what the doctrine is. Hence explanation and definition. Then it can be the more successfully argued. But by illustration in the process of argument, it can be the more persuasively presented, and successfully established. In all this the object sought is not merely an intellectual but a moral interest in the subject. With this advantage, it can be the more effectively enforced. Here then we have three chief interests. First an expository interest, which appears in the introduction and theme; secondly, a dialectical interest, which appears in the processes of the discussion; thirdly, an ethical interest, which appears prominently in the conclusion. The rhetorical attractiveness of the discourse is limited to no particular part of it and is always an instrument for successful transmission. This is not a program. Every preacher will have his own method and every modification in homiletic habits will affect the style of doctrinal discussion. But the considerations suggested at least present the main points of the homiletic problem, whatever the method of its realization.

CHAPTER III

THE ETHICAL TYPE

I. The Conception of Ethical Preaching

All preaching is in the broad sense ultimately ethical in so far at least as it aims at the production of character and the regulation of conduct by influencing the will to the choice of moral ends or ideals. But the term is used here in a more specific sense. In this specific sense ethical preaching is the exposition, inculcation and practical application to character and conduct of moral ideals of duty and of virtue. As thus defined it is a distinctive type of preaching. Just how it differs from the types of preaching already discussed is apparent at once. Both of them may have ethical substance and an ultimate ethical aim. Expository preaching, *e. g.*, from the epistle of James would necessarily be ethical in its content and aim. But the ethical sermon is not limited to Biblical material. It has wider range. Some Christian doctrines are essentially and preëminently ethical in their subject matter. They are doctrinal as related to the content of revelation and to the content of Christian thought involved in their interpretation; but ethical as related to practical realization, in character and conduct. For example, the doctrine of Faith, Repentance, and Conversion. A doctrinal sermon on either of these subjects would be ethical in substance and aim. In fact all doctrine has its ethical aspects, and there can be no doctrinal presentation of the proper sort without ethical aim. But the doctrinal sermon is not ethical in the sense of our definition. The distinction between Christian dogmatics and Christian ethics defines

the difference. Dogmatics deals with the Godward side of truth, Ethics with the manward side. The former deals with the objectively-given truths of revelation, which have become subjects of human reflection, the latter with the duties involved in the application of these truths and the virtues realized in the fulfillment of these duties. Thus doctrinal preaching lays the foundation for ethical preaching. How can one sucessfully discuss Christian duties and virtues without some understanding of the fundamental truths on which they rest?

We may differentiate ethical from what is commonly called practical preaching. All ethical preaching is practical, but not all practical preaching is ethical in the closer sense of the term. Practical preaching aims at the production of practical results in the most comprehensive sense, religious as well as moral. Any kind of sermon, expository or doctrinal, that is so shaped as to produce practical results of any kind, whether in thought, in conviction or in action, is a practical sermon. A persuasive sermon that aims without much exposition or didactic discussion, at the practical results of persuasion, is preëminently a practical sermon. The ethical sermon, however, aims at a distinctively and a specifically ethical result. The practical sermon may attempt to secure faith or to promote a receptive attitude of soul with respect to the grace of God. But the ethical sermon, of the more distinctive sort, will aim to secure those virtues that belong to faith and will inculcate the duties that are realized in such virtues. "Add to your faith virtue" is an ethical injunction. The practical sermon may aim at its result by influencing the emotions as for example the evangelistic or the parenetic sermon does. But the ethical sermon will aim at its results by influencing the conscience primarily or preëminently. The one may deal with the promises or comforts or admonitions of the Gospel, the other with the demands of the Gospel and with the obligations that are set over against

these demands. In a word the one may deal with the privileges the other with the duties that are presented by the Gospel.

Ethical preaching, moreover, may be differentiated from what has been known as revival preaching. In its ultimate intent and scope, revival preaching is, of course, ethical, for it has refernce to righteous character and conduct and, therefore, aims at reaching the conscience and will. But it differs in the following particulars. Revival preaching seeks to refresh the spiritual life of the church, the life of renewed fellowship with Christ. On the other hand ethical preaching aims at the development of those Christian virtues that are the product of the spiritual life, justice, patience, humility, temperance, fidelity, covenant virtues perhaps especially. Revival preaching, like all preaching of the evangelistic type, aims also at the conversion of men, *i. e.,* at the production of faith, repentance, and obedience to Christ, but ethical preaching aims at the realization of the fruits of all this in the imitation of Christ's example. Revival preaching looks at results in the totality of life, *i. e.,* to religious as well as moral results and on a wide field. Ethical preaching looks at life in the details of its practical moral development, *e. g.,* the development of specific virtues, and the discharge of specific duties.

Ethical preaching may also differentiate itself from what was formerly called law-preaching, *i. e.,* preaching of an ethico-evangelistic type, which was regarded as necessary preparation for revival work. To preach "the law" is to present its Godward and manward claims. The claims of law involve implicitly certain duties. These duties are realized in virtues. In the content of its conception ethics involves the notion of law. Natural or philosophical ethics involves the notion of law as related to the natural conscience; Hebrew ethics, law as revealed in the Hebrew religion; Christian ethics, law as revealed and realized in Christ. Law theistically and Christianly conceived is God's will touching a man's disposition,

purpose, action, character as related to Him and to his fellow men. That right disposition, purpose, action, character realized is virtue in its comprehensive conception. Realized distributively in the manifold relations of life, it produces the different forms of virtue, it develops the concrete qualities of a practical moral life. To preach law, therefore, is to preach ethically. Yet ethical preaching in the sense here intended is not the exact equivalent of law preaching. It differs as follows: Law-preaching was accustomed to accentuate the divine side, God's rights, God's claims, God's sanctions. Ethical preaching lays accent upon the human side mainly, what we owe, why we owe it, the result of failure to discharge the obligation. In a word, note once more, it lays its stress upon our duties and upon the virtues that, in various forms, are developed in the discharge of the obligation. Law-preaching, moreover, has for its stress-point the claims of God in their unity and totality, *i. e.*, the great, inclusive law of love, the root-principle of all moral law. Ethical preaching fixes attention upon specific duties or classes of duty and upon those virtues that spring out of and are inseparably associated with the great law or principle of love.

I have lingered with these discriminations and distinctions, not for the purpose of multiplying points of differentiation, but for the purpose of fixing a limit to our conception of ethical preaching, nor yet for the purpose of unduly limiting it, but for the purpose of fixing specific attention upon it as a type of preaching, which rightly conceived is relatively new and highly important, and for the purpose, if may be, of conditioning its greater effectiveness. Certainly its effectiveness will be measurably conditioned by a definite and vigorous conception of it and of its possibilities as a type of preaching. But still further in the interest of effectiveness, let us advance our discussion a little.

II. The Christian Quality of Ethical Preaching

In some circles that are called evangelical, there is, or perhaps I should say has been, a prejudice against ethical preaching. It has been regarded as even antagonistic to evangelical preaching, and as such has been much criticised. This prejudice has been based upon a totally wrong conception of it. It has been confounded with the deistic or rationalistic moralizing of a former period, when morality was substituted for religion, and ethics for theology, when the necessity and reality of revelation were denied and men's relations to their fellow men were divorced from their relations with God. This was the preaching of so-called "natural religion," based on naturalistic ethics, and was indeed in a measure antagonistic to the religion of redemption. In this sense it was opposed to evangelical preaching and it must be confessed it was relatively unfruitful preaching.

But let it be understood that the ethical preaching advocated in this discussion is distinctively Christian in its quality. It rests upon the revelation of God in Christ. Its basis is the grace that is revealed to us and the grace that is appropriated by us, a two fold basis, objective, as related to what God has done for us, subjective, as related to what we have done in the inward appropriation of God's work.

Let us examine this two-fold basis and see what lies back of the ethics with which in the main the Christian pulpit must deal.

1. Ethical preaching of the Christian type has for its objective basis the law of God as related to the grace of God. The law that exacts obedience is the law of Christ, the law of God as revealed, interpreted and realized in Christ.

It is first of all a law that is related to the forgiveness of sin, as revealed and proclaimed by Christ. An absolutely perfect moral life from the Christian point of view, is practically, although not theoretically, unattainable here below. A moral

law, therefore, that should exalt a perfect obedience, without association with some provision by which the defects of moral life may be overlooked and by which men may still be kept in favor with God, would be an impracticable law. It would be a law that could not be preached, with any expectation that it would ever be fully realized. How can one preach an absolute morality unless such morality be somehow available or realizable, or unless there be some provision found or disclosed by which moral defects may be cancelled in the process of its realization? In point of fact an absolute morality has practically never been insisted upon. It is only presented as an ideal. The human race has never been under sheer law, a law unrelieved by any purpose or provision of grace, hidden or revealed. There has always been an element of grace in or behind all moral law. Paul shows that back of the old Jewish and antecedent Hebrew or patriarchal revelation there was a hidden purpose of grace. But this law of grace is revealed in its fullness only in Christ. Now this is the objective basis, or one of the elements of an objective basis for practical Christian ethics. The Christian moral ideal, therefore, must be presented in its relation to the grace of God. Otherwise it is not a Christian ideal at all and is a hopeless ideal. The obedience that is inculcated by the law of Christ and the virtues that are demanded by it are rendered practicable, are made realizable by the grace of God as revealed in Christ and that first of all proclaims the forgiveness of sin. No one can successfully preach a virtue that is practically beyond every man's reach. Such preaching would only evoke hostility, or would result in complete disheartenment. We take hold of the future hopefully only as we see that our relation to the past has been adjusted.

The Christian moral law is also a law that has been fully realized and exemplified in the personal character and life of Christ. This exemplification illustrates and in effect proclaims

the possibility of its ultimate fulfillment by every human being who works in moral alliance with Christ. Christ's preaching is largely ethical, but it is all based on the assumed vital relation of ethical truth to his own person. It is his entire person, his entire complex self-revelation, and not simply his doctrines or teachings, *i. e.,* the revelation of his mind alone, that constitute the back-ground of all ethical preaching. This is the reason, largely at least, why Christ preached himself so constantly. He could not otherwise make his morality available. The peculiarity and it is a very striking, in fact a unique peculiarity, of Christian ethics is just this: It exacts nothing, the perfect exemplification of which has not, in its essence or principle, been found in the obedience of Christ's own life. The command is: "Be this, for this is what I am"; "Do this, for I did it"; "This is my commandment that ye love one another, as I have loved you." And this is why it is a new commandment. It is new in its realization and exemplification.

The Christian moral law is, moreover, a law that is related to the promise and to the gift of the Holy Spirit, the promise and the gift of moral power by which the spirit of loving obedience is secured and by which the actual obedience of life is developed. That is to say, the exactions of Christian ethics are offset not merely by the external revelation of a gracious provision of reconciliation and by an external exemplification of its realization in Christ, but by a revealed provision through which the requisite ethical motives may become inwardly operative and personally effective. Nothing is demanded by God which He is not willing and able, by the power of his spirit working within, to aid in executing. This helpful provision is a revelation of the Holy Spirit as a working force in life. It is a part of Christianity as an objective revelation of God. And in Whitsuntide the coming of the Holy Spirit as a new power in moral life is commemorated by the Christian church.

From what has already been said it is sufficiently evident that ethical preaching of the Christian type will always be grounded in the fundamental facts and truths of Christianity as the religion of grace and redemption. Success in it will ultimately depend on one's success in making these facts and truths of grace real to the mind and impressive to the heart and conscience. It will depend on what has preceded it and what lies under it. Only in so far as the pulpit is clear and forcible in its presentation of the facts and truths of grace, will it be successful in its presentation of the moral demands of Christianity. And perhaps this may answer the question, which will naturally occur, as to the proportion of ethical preaching which may be expected. There can be no doubt that there is great need, and need of a great deal, of ethical preaching.

But if one must make his preaching of grace do the work of preparation, and if success in ethical exposition and inculcation will depend on foundations already laid, it follows that the preaching of ethics must be subordinate to the preaching of grace, and the ethical note must be subordinate to the evangelical note. The proclamation of Christianity as a revelation of redemptive grace must have precedence of the proclamation of it as a revelation of moral law.

And what has already been said may furnish a general answer to the question as to how ethical preaching may be practically and specifically adjusted to the preaching of grace. It is adjusted to it by being made dependent upon it. But an additional suggestion is pertinent. It is easily possible that into the most practical part of an ethical sermon there may be introduced a definite reference to the provision of God's grace as Christ.

Bishop Brooks was very skillful, very Christian and very persuasive in bringing Christ, as an ethical ideal and source of moral power into immediate relation with the somewhat lofty and often difficult ethical themes discussed by him. This is

one of the chief sources of the exceeding helpfulness of his preaching. He presents high ideals. This is one of the distinguishing characteristics of his preaching. He was an ethical idealist of extraordinarily high degree. But he always brings Christ into practical relation with the ideals presented and he endeavors to leave the impression, and succeeds in doing it, that after all with Christ these are attainable ideals.

The attention of the reader is directed to a Prayer Meeting Address by Henry Ward Beecher* in the year 1863 just before his departure to Europe to advocate before the English people the cause of the American Union, in which he, in a very interesting and instructive manner refers to the place which Christ holds in his ethical preaching.

2. But all Christian morality is the product of an inner life. The obedience demanded and the virtues to be realized are distinctively Christian in quality. This inner root of Christian virtue is the subjective presuppositon of ethical preaching. It is the interpretation and inculcation of a living, a real inner virtue, and not a mechanical or heartless goodness.

The obedience of Christian morality is first of all the obedince of love. There is, there can be, no obedience, no virtue, that can be called Christian, which is not rooted in love. Love is the life of it. To preach a heartless obedience, or a heartless virtue is not Christian preaching. It may be ethical, but it is not Christianly ethical. It is true that it may sometimes be necessary and even desirable to inculcate human duties and virtues from the point of view of the exaction of the natural conscience, *i. e.,* from the motive of prudence or personal honor, or self-respect or social obligation, or a native sense of right and wrong that has been untrained in the school of Christ. All roads may lead to Christ. To inculcate for example the virtue of temperance, or of business honesty, from the motive of personal prudence may open into a larger view.

*Sermons 1860-1868 vol. I. page 447.

But such preaching in connection with the worship of a Christian congregation may well be exceptional. If one feels obliged to take men on their own ground it may well be along a line that will lead to the consideration of the higher Christian motives. But to deal only with the lower motives is not ethical preaching of the Christian sort at all. In the presence of a Christian congregation it is the wiser way to approach all moral subjects from the distinctively Christian point of departure. It is not the preacher's vocation to preach non-Christian ethics. Such preaching would impoverish the Christian pulpit, as it was impoverished in the eighteenth century. Morality must have a living root. Men need an underlying principle of morality that will disclose itself in all their relations with their fellow men. This needs emphasis in our day. It is needed especially in connection with the discussion of social subjects. It will be ultimately fruitless to discuss the duties of the different social classes to each other, unless they can be made to see and feel and appropriate the truth that these duties rest on some comprehensive principle that must dominate the whole life. That principle is unselfish philanthropy, and it is grounded in religion. An earnest and vigorous presentation of the character and life of Christ is essential to the most successful ethical preaching. Any man who, like the late Bishop Brooks, gives his life to the work of presenting Christ in his practical working relation with men, who every Lord's day holds before their minds the significance of his character and life for their own character and lives, and who is able to impress upon their hearts and consciences his wonderful inspiring power, is doing a great and needed work in the interest of the unification of the different contending classes and factions of human society. He will do far more than the pulpit dabbler in economic and social science. Not that one may undervalue the preacher's interest in these sciences. In the nature of the case, however, the man who deals so largely with the funda-

mental principles of the Christian life, and whose field of applied Christianity is so vast, can not have very great success in an effort to exhaust any one branch of social ethics. Moreover it is not necessary. In order to deal successfully with Christianity as applied to the vexed industrial and social problems of our day, it is not necessary for a preacher to have an exhaustive technical knowledge of the economic or social sciences. Knowledge enough he indeed will need to secure him against serious mistake in the practical application of questions in social Christian ethics. But beyond this he need not go. His chief sphere is the ethical, not the economic or sociological.

The obedience of Christian morality is also the obedience of faith. It is an obedience, it is a morality that is worthily realized in and by faith. Faith is the initial point, it is the condition, the *sine qua non*, as love is the root, the life, the substance of all Christian virtue. "In your faith supply in addition virtue" (2 Pet. 1 : 5). The entire series of virtues starts from and is realized through faith. This is the New Testament conception, and it is that of James as well as of Paul. Christian virtue, then, is as to its source religious virtue. The religious life is at the foundation of the moral life. The receptive activity is back of the out-going and out-giving activity. And as there is no Christian ethics which is not at bottom religious, so there is no ethical preaching of the Christian type which is not at bottom religious. Hence broadly and rightly conceived, there is no preaching that is more characteristically Christian than this. All preaching must, as already suggested, end in the ethical quality. The aim of Christianity is not reached till it is transumated into character and conduct. Nor is the aim of Christian preaching reached till by the power of Christian persuasion enforced by the spirit of Christ, it produces the virtues that Christianity demands.

Since now all Christian moralities are grounded in the principles of love and faith, all ethical preaching, of the Christian

type, must deal somehow with these principles. Somehow and somewhere the preacher must at last get back to the top-root of Christian morality. All this will save ethical preaching from the pettiness that attends the work of prescribing merely external and formal rules of conduct. Even Christian casuistry, a branch of Christian ethics with which the preacher, but especially the pastor, might well be more familiar, is in this way rescued from triviality. It is necessarily ennobled by its relation to the fundamental principles of the Christian life.

From the foregoing it follows that the success of ethical preaching, from the point of view of its subjective basis, will in the long run depend on one's success in getting this double root of Christian virtue fairly and fully before the minds of men and strongly impressed upon their hearts and consciences. One's ordinary preaching of the Gospel, which is but the proclamation and interpretation of the grace of God, as related to faith and love in the recipient thereof, will furnish a basis of preparation for ethical inculcation.

But the question naturally arises how more specifically may ethical preaching be adjusted in the individual sermon to what lies behind it? How can it be adjusted to fundamental principles? It is pertinent to suggest that the conclusion of the sermon, which is the most practical part of it, may readily touch the bearings of the inner principles of the Christian moral life upon the subject discussed. This is in line not only with the demands of effective ethical preaching but of good homiletic science. It may easily be done in a simple, unconventional, practical way without theological terminology and without leaving the impression that it is dragged into the sermon in an external and formal manner. A skillful preacher, and every ethical preacher especially may well train himself in skillfulness as well as in moral earnestness, will do this in a free and effective manner. After having held up before a congregation a high Christian

ideal of character and conduct, after having shown what it is, shown the need of it, and after having urged it upon men's acceptance, it is a sort of moral anticlimax for the preacher to fail to remind his hearers that all this is possible to the believing, trusting, loving, obedient heart, and that the possession of right inward principles and motives makes all a not impossible task. "His commandments are not grevious," not only because they are his, but because men trust and love him, who has first loved us. "His yoke is easy and his burden light," not only because it is the yoke and the burden of him who has himself borne them, but because men willingly take them and bear them in his strength. All this at any rate must be intelligently presupposed by the preacher who would successfully accomplish his moral task.

III. Methods of Ethical Preaching

The question of method is quite as important here if not more so, as in other types of sermon, for it is no insignificant task for any man to undertake to bring men's hearts and consciences and wills into subjection to the Christian moral life.* Neither is it an insignificant task for any man to undertake to be a guide to his fellow servants in such a ministry. The writer can claim neither the experience nor the theoretic knowledge in this, as in other homiletic realms, that would make him competent for such service. Let us, however, venture upon a few suggestions, and such as are made will be recognized as in line with approved modern ethical methods.

1. The analytic method is not uncommon, and may be made most effective. In discussing a public vice especially it becomes necessary to delve into, to analyze, and to hold attention to its sources. It is the historic method. It is a valuable method in the discussion of any individual vir-

*See Dr. Gustav Schulze's "Uber moral predigten." page 10 ff.

tue or vice, but especially those that are public. It discloses the moral conditions of social life and makes manifest the process by which the moral or immoral life of the community develops. We see it in its natural history. The preacher is thus the better able to point out and make manifest its social and moral significance and from this as a basis to discuss the more effectively its consequences and the remedies demanded. The value of thus disclosing the elements and the processes of a vice like intemperance is evident. Scientific investigators into this difficult problem find the need of such a method of inquiry. A sketch of the processes by which the public conscience is depraved, or by which class antagonism as between capitalists and their employees, is generated, or by which the character of a particular class in the community is developed, like that of the Pharisees in the time of Christ, or like the modern political boss in our American life, or by which individual character, good or bad, of any particular type is produced,—this is a method by which an intelligent and skillful ethical analyst and interpreter may render an important public service. Modern ethical preachers are skillful in moral analysis. One might cite Canon Mozley, who in this particular, as in others, reminds us of Bishop Butler of the eighteenth century. In dealing with all forms of moral good or evil the first thing to do in fact is to understand it in its sources and in its nature.

2. The method of contrast is a valuable one for the ethical preacher. It used to be said by our homiletic fathers that preaching to sinners was often a very effective way of preaching to saints and reversely. We thus reach them indirectly. The value of the Christian life is thus set before men by way of contrast. It is a process by which the Christian moral ideal is set before men, and by which they may test themselves. The test is not applied to them directly by another hand. It comes to them from across the border, from the country which they

are accustomed to regard as foreign, but which they find more native to them than they thought. Because the test was not ostensibly designed for them, they may be the more ready to apply it to themselves. It is a phase of the positive method. Our fathers were in their generation in many ways wiser than the children of homiletic light in our own day. Modern preaching is often deficient in ethical skillfulness. Ordinary pastoral preaching which deals so largely with the duties and virtues, with the satisfactions and rewards of the Christian life, and which exalts the Christian ideal of character and conduct, is pretty sure to leave some salutary impression upon those in the congregation who do not profess and call themselves Christians. The same principle holds good as regards any type of ethical preaching. The presentation of some duty to one class proves to be a most successful reminder of duties that belong to another class. The inculcation of a virtue furnishes a powerful admonition against the contrasted vice. It is a process that avoids all direct antagonism. It may be necessary in exceptional cases to make a direct attack on some one man in the congregation, or upon some one class of men represented in the congregation, but in general it is not the wiser or the more successful method. A preacher may sometimes touch and influence the wealthy men of a congregation, who are the employers of workmen, by going a long way around through other sections of the congregation in order to get at them and by advice which is ostensibly wholly unrelated to them. The seemingly irrelevent is often the most pertinent.

3. The descriptive and dramatic method has proved most effective in moral discourse. Henry Ward Beecher was most skillful and most powerful in a species of semi-dramatic representation of moral processes and results. It was the descriptive style applied with great passion in the psychological and ethical realm. His "Lectures to Young Men," which are among the most brilliant and successful discourses he ever de-

livered or published, although much too exuberant in rhetorical quality and too tropical in imagery for the literay tastes of our day, abound in this descriptive and dramatic style. In a most vividly concrete way they depict the processes and the rewards of vice and of virtue as well. In them are disclosed Mr. Beecher's Shakesperian gifts. Just here very largely was the secret of the power of the preaching about heaven and hell, which prevailed in former days. Of course, a reproduction of just that type of dramatic method would not avail in our day. It would be regarded as insincere, unreal and artificially overwrought. But this scenic method in general, chastened by the modern severities of æsthetic taste, might be used most effectively in delineating the strictly natural outworkings of good and evil in the present life. The preacher who is skillful in making real to his hearers the present curse of sin and the present blessing of goodness, may well leave to the God and Father of all men the outcome thereof in a world of which he knows but little.

4. Dignity of treatment is important in any method. It is itself a method. The so-called moral sermons of the eighteenth century, were objectionable on account of their pettiness. Subjects of small ethical import like a person's manners, or personal habits, like the wearing of long hair, or like the occupations of life, such as gardening or farming, were treated with great minuteness and prolixity of detail. The best way to treat small, relatively small, ethical subjects is to do it in connection with the discussion of some larger subject and in a seemingly subordinate and incidental way, thus reaching the hearer indirectly. Just here is preëminently the value of the expository method of preaching. One may thus touch upon relatively insignificant subjects without seeming to make too much of them. Thus small subjects get new meaning and importance from the larger and more comprehensive and more general circles of truth with which they are indirectly associated. They become

especially weighty, as being brought into relation with fundamental principles. And they are the more effectively handled by being touched briefly.

5. A tone of manly persuasiveness is necessary in whatever method. An offensive harshness will injure the effect of any sermon that would awaken the conscience and change the course of life. A preacher may use great plainness of speech. He may be severe in his moral earnestness. He may on occasian even evoke the thunders of moral wrath. But all moral severity should have a background of human kindliness and graciousness and unselfishness. The ethical preacher needs the angel of mercy to stand sentinel over his heart and his lips need the guardianship of wisdom and sobriety and philanthropy. He who interprets and enforces the law of Christ will doubtless above all else need the grace of fidelity, but it is a fidelity that should be tempered with the grace of Christian sympathy and courtesy. It is the fidelity of a Christian gentleman.

IV. The Need of Ethical Preaching

The example of our Lord may well suggest the vocation of every preacher in whatever period or nationality or communion to interpret and inculcate the moral claims of Christianity. They are claims that are always urgent and they appeal to the common intelligence and conscience—to the common humanity —of the race. Christ's preaching was largely ethical. It had indeed, for its back-ground his own personal revelation of God. It had a distinctly religious basis. It all centered in his religion of grace and redemption, and it never strayed beyond its borders. But the fact that Christ was a preacher of morality should never be ignored or minimized. Christianity is, indeed, in its substance far more than "sublimated ethics," and Christ is far more than an ethical teacher and guide. But while Christianity is grounded in religion, it ultimates in moral

character and moral life, and the ethical factor is of supreme significance. Christ's preaching is not only broadly but specifically ethical. It deals with fundamental and wide-reaching principles, principles that lie at the basis of all worthy human character and conduct and are universally valid, but it does not lose itself in general principles. It applies them to determinate lines of conduct and to specific acts. The Sermon on the Mount, which is from beginning to end an ethical discourse or a compendium of ethical expositions and inculcations, does not lose itself in generalities. It deals, indeed, with the broad features of the kingdom of God and with the fundamental principles of righteous character and conduct in its subjects, but it applies these principles to the details of practical life. If Christ had given himself simply to the task of laying down ethical principles for the subjects of his kingdom, he would have appeared in the rôle of the ethical philosopher. But he adapted his moral teachings to specific needs and obligations, as conditioned by the specific relations of his hearers. In this he showed himself to be the preacher and proved that he had the conscious vocation of the preacher. It is a fundamental homiletic principle that preaching shall adapt itself to the present, specific needs of individual men and classes of men. Christ recognized this principle, and in this he is the preacher's example although he is far more than a homiletic model. There is doubtless a large field for ethical preaching of a somewhat general and comprehensive character. Character building, in a broad and inclusive sense, is a problem with which the modern pulpit in its theories of religious and ethical life deals more largely than the pulpit of other days. Such preaching will deal with general ethical principles, it will be positive and affirmative, rather than critical and negative; it will trust to the development of time for its results; it will deal with ethical exposition rather than with ethical inculcation, and in general it will move far from the realm of ethical

polemics. Ethical preaching of this sort, as illustrated by such preachers as the late Canon James B. Mozley, is of the most fruitful and ennobling character. But the ethical preaching of our day cannot linger wholly in this broad field. There is urgent need in our time, and especially perhaps in this country, of a more specific and critical type of ethical preaching. The conditions of life demand it. There is need of more searching work with the conscience. The pulpit itself needs it, in the interest of its own virility and moral power in the community. Ethical preaching that is definite, critical, searching, is manly, straightforward preaching, and it should do much in securing the pulpit from a onesided intellectualism or didacticism on the one hand, and from an over-emotional or sentimental quality on the other hand.

But the thing to be accentuated here is the practical moral needs of men in our day and especially in their associate lives. The vast field of social ethics is open to the pulpit as never before. One shrinks from entering this field with his homiletic nostrum, or with his professional advice, and especially with his critical polemic against the evils of his day. For one runs the risk of seeming to look too exclusively at the dark side of life, of undervaluing the good that lingers and still reigns and of seeming to sanction a negative and belligerent attitude towards the community of which he is a part. But let us look fairly at the field and see straight and listen as we look to the summons that calls for the prophetic voice.

Beginning with the church, what do we find here? A living Christianity still, no doubt. Vast philanthrophy and enterprising activity unlimited. But in much it is a Christianity that caricatures the religion of Christ. As represented by the church, the Christian life is notably defective with respect to ethical comprehensiveness. It is such in every age no doubt, for that which is complete is far away. But it is a defect that is exceptionally characteristic of the church life of our day.

The active Christian virtues are many of them cultivated. Christian benevolence in an eminent degree. Perhaps the present surpasses all other periods in the scope of its benevolent activities. But it is a onesided development. The principle, the law of self-denial for others' sake, which is the very heart of Christian benevolence, is not cultivated comprehensively. Many forms of selfishness, sometimes refined, but often gross and coarse, mar the symmetry of Christian character and corrupt and cripple the life of the church. Selfishness in the form of self-assertion. The grace of humility is not carefully and delicately cultivated. It is an age when man is exalted. Our fathers exalted God, in his greatness, majesty, righteousness, and holiness. The littleness, the weakness, and sinfulness of men was proportionally accentuated. An erroneous because a onesided estimate of man no doubt it was. But the age has swung to the opposite extreme. And we need a type of ethical preaching that will recall the fact of human weakness, and perversity and guilt, that will lead men to see their littleness and meanness and sinfulness, and that will promote the nurture of humility.

Selfishness in the form of unreined ambition has invaded church life. The political spirit is not an unfamiliar manifestation in the church, the spirit of intrigue, the spirit that seeks to accomplish desired ends by subtle indirection, by manipulating majorities in the deliberative assembly, rather than by open, free and manly Christian discussion; the spirit that would vote up or vote down by sheer numerical force some of the gravest questions that concern the interests of God's kingdom. In political life the wire-puller and the party boss sneer at debate and at the intelligent deliberations of the representative assembly, set at naught the opinions and interests, the will and the suffrages of responsible citizens and seek to carry the most important questions of legislation, or measures that are not worthy to be brought to the attention of any

civilized legislative assembly, by a species of bulldozing, by "fixing" votes through caucus pressure, or by "trading," or by bribery. And something of this spirit the church has caught, not in its most corrupt and degraded and degrading forms, of course. But with too much truth it may be charged, as it has been charged, that some of our ecclesiastical assemblies manipulate the suffrages of its members rather than carry their measures by the power of argument and persuasion. And at times they have ceased to be deliberative assemblies. Votes that are won by a species of caucus manipulation sometimes displace the suffrages of rational and responsible men. And all this in the name of Christ and in the name of the church and of the kingdom of God! Denominational rivalries in decadent rural communities perpetuate the uneconomic folly and the moral disgrace of ecclesiastical schism that is to a considerable extent responsible for the decreasing power of religion and for its failure to meet the higher needs of men and to promote the general moral welfare of society. Metropolitan churches compete for financial leadership, for numerical supremacy, for social prestige, and preachers are sometimes crushed by the exactions of this ecclesiastical ambition or are demoralized by its tax upon the sensationalism that supports and perpetuates the unholy competition. The commercial spirit is in the churches. Men of unsavory repute in business life have leadership in their councils, and institutional prosperity is often substituted for vital religious welfare.

Selfishness in little things that compromises the grace of Christian fidelity, and that issues in thoughtless neglect or in deliberate repudiation of the claims of the Christian covenant is well-nigh universal in Protestant Christendom. Selfishness in the form of self-indulgence is wide spread and most baleful in its power of demoralization and corruption. It is, indeed, very common and it is very easy to give money for

objects of charity and benevolence. People have more to give, indefinitely more than our fathers had, and the habit of giving is general. But it is also increasingly common for members of Christ's church to pamper themselves. The old-fashioned virtue of economy, the companion virtue of thrift, which was the pride of our fathers, is no longer widely cultivated. There is lavish freedom and unlimited range in expenditure for worldly indulgences, which cut into the spiritual life of the church. There is a vast amount of fashionable conventionalism, of social insincerity, of ostentatious vanity and of vulgar display even in ecclesiastical circles among the American people. "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the vain glory of life" abound in our day as of old. People are not content to live simply. "High thinking and plain living" were the characteristic virtues of our fathers. We have lost much of their homely manhood. Despite our liberality in giving, despite our increasing practical as well as theoretic interest in social and industrial questions, there is still in the churches of the land a vast amount of indifference to the needs, the wrongs and the sufferings of the unblessed classes. It is easier to give money than to go out of one's way to look up and personally to interest one's self in those whose chief need is human sympathy and who might be reached and blessed thereby.

Looking again at domestic life, do we not find scope for ethical preaching of most searching sort? The Lord's day is not what it once was in the life of the family. One can not very well magnify or defend many aspects of the old Puritan Sabbath. Its observance was wrong in theory and in many respects in practice. Too much emphasis was put upon the external religious sanctions of the day, if it be permissible to speak of any sanction as religious which is external. Too little stress was laid upon its moral and in general its practical as well as inwardly religious significance and value.

But with all its defects it was a day of power in the life of the family. The secularizing of the day, lack of respect for its moral and religious meaning, loss of its opportunities, neglect of its institutions and failure relatively to differentiate it from other days in the habits of domestic life have had very serious results in the homes of the people. One thing is sure; it would be a most beneficent thing if the pulpits of this country were to direct attention to and to advocate more fully and more forcibly the immense practical value of the Lord's day for family life. There is, it is to be feared, a general neglect of family worship, and consequent loss of that staying and sanctifying power that is necessary to protect the modern household against the corruptions of life. Religious teaching, nurture, training, discipline, is at discount in the domestic circle. We find a measurable loss of a sense of the domestic vocation. Those household virtues that are necessary to fit one for the larger and more responsible place in civic and ecclesiastical life are not adequately cultivated. Extravagance in family life abounds. Lax ideas of marriage and of divorce threaten the very existence of the family. All this suggests lines of ethical teaching, and admonition relative to family life that are urgently demanded.

Looking at commercial life, what do we see? Not, as has been claimed, an essentially corrupt system, in accordance with which the business of the world is conducted. Corrupt business men cannot successfully plead that they are the product of a corrupt system. They are the product of a corrupt commercial greed and ambition, not of essentially vicious commercial principles. The principle of competition is not vicious. The social foundations are not wholly awry. Methods are corrupt, procedure is corrupt only because men are corrupt. There are thousands of business men who keep their commercial integrity—who are not conscious of working un-

der a vicious system, and who know that they are not tempted simply by being brought into antagonism with competition. What we behold is a habit of commercial recklessness, wide-reaching in its wreckage of character and reputation, that is the product of human greed. We see the looting of banks and of business corporations, the ruin of railroad stocks, in men's insane self-indulgence and in their ambition to store colossal private fortunes; the dishonest handling of trust moneys, product of the gambling spirit of commercial speculation, by men who have the nerve to attempt to vindicate their diversion of other men's properties from legitimate uses, as a species of philanthropy. We see the ambitions of wealthy men to control the industries and the markets; we see them over-reaching, circumventing, crowding, crushing, ruining their competitors, without an apparent twinge of conscience, without an emotion of human pity in their breasts or a blush upon their faces. And these are men too, that hold places of trust and honor in the churches of Christ, men, some of them clean in their private morals, but without a commercial or a social conscience, and others of them notorious for their moral lasciviousness and general corruption of personal character. We see reckless stock gambling, the bribery of legislatures, attempted bribery even of the judiciary, the retaining of prominent lawyers by public utility corporations to keep them within the technical limits of the law, and to save them in their ravage of other men's property, from the penitentiary. We witness the paying of tribute by wealthy corporations to political bosses in compensation for legislative privileges, which are knocked off at auction by men who themselves may owe their legislative offices to the commercialized political influence of these same corrupt boss leaders of men; we see unblushing bribery in elections by these conscienceless political charlatans, and by corporations that are financially interested in the choice of candidates to

public office. We see the practical bribery of Congress by the protected industries of the country in behalf of increase, or "stand pat" defense of schedules of duty; we see a cynical indifference on the part of wealthy lordlings and world-mongers with respect to the unblessed classes, and in reaction we see these classes themselves deteriorating in manhood, perverting the standards of industry, combining, and recklessly plotting against public order and all unwittingly against their own higher interests. Has the pulpit of the country no vocation? Has it no voice, as against such corruptions, corruptions that endanger the very existence of the republic?

If we look at political life more specifically, and not wholly in its commercial aspects, we find the rule of party that often discredits honest patriotism, that with hypocritical pretence and with the swagger of loud-mouthed bluster prates of its Americanism, that agitates in the national legislative assemblies with jingo recklessness unto the disturbance of international harmony, that exalts notoriously corrupt men into positions of public trust and holds them there, that discredits the patriotism of high-minded citizens, who insist upon the right of honest voting; when men of independent character are nominated by unpartisan citizenship, it cries out; "We cannot afford to have the precedent established that a handful of citizens can go ahead and make nominations regardless of the nominating machinery of our party." And thus it comes about that the party standard is elevated above the Christian standard of citizenship and political morality. We find political parties carried into power upon the basis of promises issued in political platforms that are shamelessly disregarded in subsequent political action, the fulfillment of which in fact was never honestly intended. And intelligent and honest Christian citizens are expected to stand this and they do stand it, and despite the rapid development of in-

dependent citizenship, there are too few still to withstand it. We find the lobby and we find notorious lobbyists elevated to important places of public trust. The boss and the bulldozer and the briber have been let loose and party allegiance has turned the government away from some of the most cherished traditions of our fathers.

And then if we look at the newspaper press, we see in many of its representatives, a reflection of the lower tastes of the populace, and unblushing defiance of the higher sentiments and higher morality of the civilized portion of the community. We see more than a facile tolerance of evils that should be nameless and hidden. Phases of life that all decent people should agree to relegate into silence and obscurity are paraded in a dirty species of literature that masquerades under the guise of what calls itself realism. Private vices are exploited by filthy realism and are pictured to the imagination in a low type of pictorial or descriptive art unto the degradation of the moral tastes and sentiments and conviction of youths. And this unblushing indecency calls itself enterprising journalism! We see here a greed for coarse sensation, a taste for low, coarse, grotesque drollery, misnamed humor, a relish for the insinuations of evil that are often worse than open slander, and we find here a shameless invasion of the sanctities of the home and of the rights of personal manhood and womanhood.

These are some of the objective points towards which ethical preaching may well be judiciously directed. It may seem a dark picture that has been given. It is a picture which, even if only approximately correct, may easily suggest the question whether the moral stamina of the American people be not already to a large extent undermined, and its moral fibre already in process of very distinct deterioration. The question has already been raised and to some, indeed to many, it has seemed to be true of no inconsiderable section

of the American people. But, of course, there is a better side that no broad-minded, large-hearted, generous-spirited preacher will permit himself to ignore or forget. People are often not so bad as they seem, and are often better in their individual than in their associate lives. Reckless violence is better than dry rot. There is rallying and staying power still left. Looking at the Christian section of the nation, with all its defects, there is ground for hope. A genuine Christianity, the Christianity of Christ, is still represented by the church and the influence thereof is still very great. The preacher who would come to his fellow men with a message of hope will have no sympathy with that wholesale denunciation of the church which comes from a class of men that have lost their footing and who deny that the church is entitled to the claim to represent the kingdom of God on earth.

What has been said is simply to indicate that the department of social ethics furnishes an abundant sphere for the work of the pulpit on the critical side. There is no need, however, that the evils sketched be the object of direct polemic attack. The question of method is an independent question. It may be possible to present the positive side and to bring these evils to the light and to place them in judgment before it. The value of the ethical polemic will depend on many things, on its tone, its skill, its form, relative infrequence, upon who handles it, and when and where and how. The young preacher has perhaps, hardly the requisite observation and experience of the moral evils of his time and may lack the trained skill requisite to the most effective work in this line. It is not, perhaps, advisable that, in the early period of his ministry he should preach to any very considerable extent upon these social evils. At least it may well be only an occasional task. It is easily overdone. There is a large field for ethical preaching that lies outside the ethical

polemic. The inculcation of Christian duties and virtues as related to individual life and to the more limited sphere of associate life may well be a large part of one's ordinary preaching. Attack on social evils that appear on the wider fields of life may well be reserved for exceptional occasions, and when attempted it should be done with a merciless thoroughness, and with full command of facts.

CHAPTER IV

THE EVANGELISTIC TYPE

I. The Conception of Evangelistic Preaching

It is the presentation of the Gospel with reference to the immediate, definite result of winning men to the allegiance of Christ. It presupposes some knowledge of Christ on the part of the hearer, and is, therefore, to be distinguished from missionary preaching. All forms of "mission preaching," whose object is to convince men of the truth of Christianity and of the reasonableness of Christ's claim to their allegiance and to persuade them to accept such allegiance may be regarded, as it is by German preachers, as belonging in a comprehensive sense to the evangelistic type of preaching. It is at once apologetic and evangelistic, apologetic in its immediate method, evangelistic in its ultimate aim. English preachers sometimes classify apologetic with evangelistic preaching. Its object being to convince the mind, and by such convincing to lay the foundation for such persuasion as will win men in personal allegiance to Christ, it "should be penetrated with an evangelistic spirit." In discussing evangelistic preaching Dr. R. W. Dale deals to a considerable extent with methods of apology.* In the United States, however, it is generally regarded as belonging distinctively to the persuasive type of preaching, whose object is the conquest of the will, rather than to the apologetic type, whose aim is primarily to convince the mind. It is assumed that the work of convincing has already been accomplished. But

*Nine Lectures on Preaching, Lecture VII. Evangelistic Preaching pp. 182-282.

it is a specific kind of persuasive preaching. In the comprehensive sense all preaching, as has already been frequently intimated, must be persuasive. No apologetic preaching can be effective which is not persuasive. Paracletic preaching, as dealing with the promises and comfort of the Gospel is nothing if not persuasive. All ethical preaching, which aims to bring the will into subjection to the Christian law of righteousness, is in its very conception persuasive. All revival preaching, which would promote religious awakening, seeking thus to refresh the spiritual and moral life of the church, as well as the conversion of men, must be characteristically persuasive. But the evangelistic type of preaching is persuasive in the specific sense that it aims at the immediate result of winning men in faith and obedience to the personal acceptance of Christ as their redeemer and master. To summarize then; Defined as to its subject matter, it is the presentation of the Gospel message of grace. It deals with the very heart of Christianity. It may have great range and variety of content, but it all centres in the great message. This is doubtless the original substance of Christian preaching. It is nearest the original apostolic type of preaching and nearest the original message of our Lord. Defined as to its object, it is to win men to the discipleship of faith, repentances, obedience and love by the power of persuasive speech or by the presentation of appropriate motives, with such effectiveness as to persuade them to yield to the grace and authority of Christ.

II. The Need of Pastoral Evangelism

Whether the church in our day needs the evangelist who is not a pastor may be an open question. There is doubtless a place for the professional evangelist. But his value will depend on the kind of evangelist he is. It is not, however, my purpose to discuss this question. The sure thing is, and it

can be no open question, that we do need the pastor who is also an evangelist, or at least who can preach evangelistically. Every man who enters the Christian ministry should train himself to preach thus. It is a serious mistake for a minister to spend time in pursuits that are of secondary importance to him as a minister and to neglect his message. It is his first duty to learn to handle the Gospel of Christ effectively. It is not creditable to him that his church should be obliged to look to a special class of men for this type of service. The churches have to a large extent lost faith in the ability of educated ministers to do the work of the evangelist. In a general, wide-reaching religious movement in a community, the services of the right sort of professional evangelist are without doubt of great value. But this should never supersede the evangelism of ordinary pastoral service. Upon the question before us, I suggest the following considerations.

1. The demand for pastoral evangelism is involved in the claims of Christianity upon men, Christ presents himself as an object to be received in an act of personal allegiance. The beginning of practical, working relations with Christ is an act of faith. No man makes a beginning with the claims of the Gospel upon his allegiance without a willing response to it. All other demands presuppose this. All preaching that presents the weighty truths of Christianity with reference to edification or moral incentive assumes a discipleship already secured by the presentation in some way of the claims of the Gospel upon personal allegiance. The first thing, not the last thing, then, for a minister to do for those who have not entered upon Christian discipleship is to present Christ to them as an object of personal faith and allegiance. This, of course, may be done, and done effectively in connection with the processes of Christian nurture. But so long as there are those in any congregation, who have grown to maturity without having entered upon the life of Christian discipleship,

so long will there be a demand for some form of the evangelistic type of preaching.

2. The pastoral commission involves the evangelistic commission. Edification is not the sole pastoral function. The original apostle was not a permanent pastor. He was an evangelist. The earliest preaching was evangelistic, not pastoral. The original preacher's commission was that of the evangelist, not of the pastor. Christ chose and commissioned evangelists, not pastors. The pastor was a later product of church life. A special class of men was needed for the work of spreading Christianity. A special class may be needed in our day, and those who enter upon such a work must vindicate their calling and prove their credentials by their training, their consecration, their wisdom, their unselfish devotion, and by their success in their work. But the modern pastor should not fail to represent, in some form and in some measure, the evangelism of the apostle. The apostle is a fisher of men, and if the modern pastoral preacher represents in any worthy *material sense* what is left of the evangelistic phase of the apostolic commission, he can not cease to be a fisher of men. The flock of God must be fed, but those who are not of the Good Shepherd's fold must also be won. Building up and gathering in should go on together, and the gathering in can not be effected wholly by the slow processes of Christian nurture. The church receives those whom Christ receives, and who receive him, and those who receive him are not all nurtured into his grace. Many, indeed, who enter the church from the catechetical class are brought to the conscious reception of Christ by the presentation of his claims evangelistically. More of the subjects of Christian nurture might enter the church with a more thorough consecration to Christ and to his church, if these claims were more definitely and urgently presented. But what shall we say of those who have long

been under the power of evil habit and who need the presentation of stirring motives? This class is increasing even while the work of religious education is enlarging its scope. The pulpit will lose power with the church and with the community if it is untrue to its evangelistic commission.

3. The needs of the ministry are involved here. We talk about the homiletic mind. It should be understood that this involves the evangelistic mind. The cultivation of the evangelistic mind, as a part of one's general homiletic culture, would have a beneficial effect in various ways upon one's ministry. It would aid one in discriminating as to the practical importance of the themes he presents from the pulpit. The evangelistic mind is a source of evangelistic divination. It is the evangelistic preacher who will deal with the very heart of the Gospel. One may indeed not always know what the heart of the Gospel is. One may fancy he has it, when he has it not. He may cultivate the "Gospel of Going On" instead of the Gospel of staying with Christ. But the true evangelistic mind involves a condition of insight into the Gospel, and whatever one's apprehensions or misapprehensions as to the Gospel, it is this that he wants. No by-play for this man. He will have, he must have, a Gospel of promise and hope and help that can be preached and must be preached. The pastor who cultivates the evangelistic habit of mind is pretty sure to find himself led toward an evangelistic centre and he will not be content to play upon the outskirts. It has often been this man with an evangelistic mind that has rediscovered the Gospel for the pulpit. Luther had it, and he was an evangelistic preacher, such as of necessity, and it was he who rediscovered the Gospel of redemption. When theology becomes petrified and can be no longer successfully preached, who is it that comes to the front with a new way of stating old truths, or even with a new theology that can be preached? It is the evangelistic preacher. Take the case of Jonathan Edwards.

He made the theology of his day more preachable and he preached it with amazing power. Take the case of the Tennants in the Presbyterian church. These men were "new light" men. They were antagonized by the men of pastoral routine and of orthodox conformity. But they preached with new power, because they on the whole got a little nearer to the heart of the Gospel. Take the case of President Finney. He too was a "new light" man. He had new views of human accountability and of every man's possibilities with the Gospel, and he had great power in reaching the consciences and wills of men. It is not the true evangelistic mind that loses its grip of the Gospel of redemption for needy men, and that identifies Christianity with a species of "sublimated ethics."

It is this too that fosters positiveness in preaching. It is the positive tone that lifts any type of preaching into its best. In the early and mid-period of his ministry, the evangelistic preaching of Henry Ward Beecher was positive and incisive, and one fancies that this was tributary to positiveness in his preaching in general. His didactic and ethical preaching was of a higher order than it was subsequently. Different types of preaching influence each other. Didactic preaching influences ethical preaching and evangelistic preaching influences them both. The evangelistic mind is preëminently positive.

It will elevate the spiritual tone of one's preaching. It will even affect its rhetorical quality in the best sense of the word. It is, as of necessity, definite in its aim and is fervid and sympathetic in its spirit. How can a habit of definiteness and of earnestness and of sympathetic fervor in one type of preaching fail to appear in other types? And how shall it fail to make the preacher more powerful rhetorically? How shall it fail to uplift the entire work of preaching and the conduct of public worship as well?

And finally it will be felt in the entire work of one's minis-

try. It recognizes the duty of a minister to win men to Christ. If one's preaching is wholly unevangelistic, the entire work of the parish is likely to correspond. The converse is also true. And this spirit of the herald, of the fisher of men, will lift the spiritual life of the whole church and will quicken all its missionary activities. It will thus supplement the educative work of the church in the community. The church has to deal in our day with an increasingly large number of people, who can be reached and won only by efforts whose inspiration is the very heart of the Gospel, the very heart of an apostolic ministry, the passion to rescue men.

III. Evangelistic Culture

In evangelistic, as in all other types of preaching, special gifts will doubtless win special success. Some preachers are unusually gifted with that power by which they easily find their way to the hearts, consciences and wills of their hearers. The great evangelist is doubtless a special product and a special gift of and to the church. Such a one is pretty sure to find his way into the work of the professional evangelist, or into a pastoral ministry that will be a perpetual evangelism. Undue stress is sometimes laid upon these special gifts. Dr. R. W. Dale regretfully regarded himself as deficient in evangelistic gifts and in some things he has said leaves the impression that but little can be done without a special evangelistic endowment.* This is rather discouraging to the preacher of ordinary equipment, who would be a fisher of men. Every preacher should cultivate, and may cultivate with a measure of success, such gifts as he may have. Any man who may be a preacher at all may achieve something in this field.

Let us consider some of the qualities that are important in this type of preaching and that may and should be cultivated.

*Yale Lectures; Lecture VII. Page 182.

1. Culture of the feelings and affections is a necessary condition of evangelistic power. In modern religious pedagogy this receives a good deal of attention. It may well receive stronger emphasis in pastoral culture. Culture of the feelings and affections is just as important as mental and moral culture, and will show its results. The ministerial calling is prolific of agencies for such culture. There is a Christian literature that expresses the strongest and purest emotions of the human heart and the preacher has access to it as none other has or can have. Christian poetry, and especially the religious poetry of the Bible, enriches the emotional and affectional life. There are also the ordinary means of personal religious nurture, prayer, meditation, social worship and Christian intercourse and fellowship. These means of grace, which are the preachers' special possession in a sort, deepen and enrich the life of religious sentiment and feeling, or should and will if worthily used. There is also contact with the sinful, sorrowful, suffering world. There is nothing like familiarity with the tragedy and pathos of human life to make one human. Men differ in their emotional susceptibilities. There are different types of feeling, as there are different mental types, and different ways of manifesting feeling. Emotion need not be mercurial in order to be real. But the true preacher, and preëminently the evangelistic preacher, always has some capacity, whatever the type or method of it, of being emotionally wrought upon by those to whom he speaks. Successful evangelistic preaching presupposes this. Consider the object of the evangelistic sermon. It is to reach the will and secure action. To accomplish this it is necessary, indeed, to convince the mind, or to be able to assume that it is already convinced, and to win the conscience to the approval of the claims of duty and to condemnation of its neglect or violation. But more. It is necessary to make the object, that is presented as an object

of choice, desirable. This can only be done by awakening an emotional interest in it. There are many ways of stirring such an interest and of awakening a sense of the desirableness of the object presented. But one thing is of supreme importance. It is that the preacher himself should be moved by the object he advocates. No right feeling can be awakened, and no right desire quickened in the hearer, unless the preacher himself have the feeling corresponding to that which he would awaken. Capacity for such feeling can be indefinitely cultivated.

2. Cultivation of the imagination is another requisite. It is not easy to make invisible things real. In the largest and best sense they are, indeed, native to us, and every man has some capacity for the ideal. But it is badly overlaid by the sensuous life. The invisible can not be made real without the use of the imagination. The images of things visible represent things that are invisible, and such representative images move the emotions. A minister's calling furnishes abundant material for the culture of the imagination. He deals with the ideal side of human life, and with the lofty ideal realities that lie beyond. The literature that is tributary to his professional life in general is especially tributary to the culture of the imagination. Biblical truth is presented largely through the forms of the imagination. The Biblical method of teaching is the poetic method. The diction of our Lord is poetic, not scientific. Life also furnishes a school for the training of the imagination. The preacher deals with the dramatic aspects of human life, with the tragedy of sin and suffering, with the defeats of life, and with its joys and triumphs. Over against his ideal life stands life's reality. All this is a powerful stimulant to the imagination. The preacher is an idealist; he is also a realist. And his familiarity with actual life, not less than with ideal life necessitates the culture of the imagination. In this prosaic

world of actuality this ideal realist may be a moving force.

3. The culture of moral earnestness is of central significance. Note some of its elements. Sincerity is the heart of it. Moral earnestness can not be successfully simulated. The speech of the insincere man will bewray him, and this will be fatal to any man who undertakes to preach evangelistically. The self-seeker can not win men. A positive, enterprising, aspiring man is exposed to the temptation to self-seeking. One must live on guard and cultivate an unselfish temper of mind. Nothing, except positive, open vice, will so soon destroy the influence of a preacher of the Gospel as any disclosure of personal selfishness. No one ever doubted the entire sincerity of Mr. Dwight L. Moody, and here was one of the sources of his power. The professional evangelist especially is exposed to the temptation to self-seeking, and particularly the temptation to self-aggrandizement.

Elevation and cheerfulness of spirit is another element. One who lives in his emotions, who is earnest to win men, but especially one who is earnest to win success in his efforts, is likely to be subject to revulsions of feeling. If he does not succeed according to his expectations he may easily fall into the habit of complaining. Professional evangelists are greaty exposed to this temptation. They complain of the deadness of the church, with much reason doubtless, and they have a very lively sense of human depravity. But the true fisher of men will live on guard against a censorious spirit and a bitter tongue, for they will cripple his power. No man needs so cheerful a soul as the one who is bent on winning men to Christ. The discouragements are very great. One will need all the hopefulness and kindliness and sweetness of temper he can command. It is all necessary to his moral earnestness.

Force of will is another element. Men must be made to feel the strength of the preacher's purpose. There is a mighty contagion in a consecrated resolution. Of course, this is something that can not be paraded. One must be adroit as well as resolute. But one's purpose must be felt. He who would succeed in winning men must learn to handle men. This ability may be cultivated by any man who has the gift of a leader. One must be able to rally men. He must concentrate his force upon the one point towards which he aims and drive for it with all possible energy. Men will feel the power of such a man, and he will win their respect and confidence. This power may be cultivated. No successful evangelistic preacher has ever failed to cultivate it. Power to grip a congregation and to wrestle with men in his effort to win them to Christ was one of Mr. Moody's great evangelistic gifts. It was a superb illustration of moral force.

4. Culture of a strong and positive faith is a condition of evangelistic power. The specific truths to which faith especially attaches itself will necessarily vary in different periods. The phases of truth with which, in the changing conditions of Christian thought and experience, the evangelistic preacher deals, will vary accordingly. In the Reformation and post-Reformation periods the central truth was Justification by Faith only. In the English Wesleyan revival, it was Regeneration and the Witness of the Spirit. In American revivals of the mid period of the last century the freedom of the will and personal responsibility in the work of conversion received special attention. In line with this movement in our day the ethical element in faith, by virtue of which men surrender themselves to Christ as the master of life and enter into fellowship with his spirit and his work, is made prominent. To receive the inspiration of Christ and to follow his example are the prominent features of the Christian life that are kept before us. And Christ is exalted as the

ideal of all complete human character as well as the power by which it is realized in men.

But the background of all successful evangelistic preaching has at all times been a recognition in some form of the two great facts of sin and redemption. They have been conceived variously. Different aspects of these realities have been accentuated at different times. But the facts themselves have in some form been at the basis of this type of preaching in every period of Christian history.

The fact of sin is the presupposition of the fact of redemption. Any denial of sin involves a denial of redemption. If the word sin has lost its meaning, there is no meaning left in the word redemption. The reality of the one stands or falls with the reality of the other. Whether it be the guilt of sin, or its bondage, or its delusion, or its meanness, or its misery that is made prominent, it has always been apprehended as sin, as an abnormal and perverse manifestation of personal freedom, and it has been thus proclaimed with great force of conviction in every period of most effective evangelistic preaching. It is not necessary, nor is it possible, for us to linger with it and dwell upon it and belabor it, as our fathers did. One need not speculate much about its genesis, nor debate much about its nature. But one must deal frankly and fairly with the fact and when the fact is pushed upon men's attention, it should be done with such effectiveness that they will see it and feel it. It is not so much a question of quantity in the presentation as of force of conviction and force of statement. The quality of this sort of preaching is of far more importance than its quantity.

Redemption also as a fact accomplished in Christ is the very heart of evangelistic preaching. It is a redemption objectively complete in its provisions as being God's work; a redemption sincerely offered to all men and for the application of which abundantly helpful provision has been made.

All this also presupposes faith in the capacity of men for a religious life and the possibility that any man may put away his sin and enter that life. And this again presupposes strong confidence in the ethical and religious significance of that act of faith by which men enter the Christian life, as involving emancipation from the guilt and power of sin and as containing in germ the possibilities of all Christian virtue. With respect to these things the evangelistic preacher may not waver, the fact of sin, the fact of redemption, the possibilities of all men in Christ, and the saving significance and availingness of faith. Men may differ about many things even here within this circle of facts and truths. But if they hold hard by the main lines, their differences need not compromise their message. Theological and philosophical difficulties will present themselves to all men who think. The young preacher of our day is quite likely to fear that these difficulties may unfit him for this type of preaching. And he may find those who will endeavor to persuade him that he is right in this fear and that his only hope is in accepting their view of the facts, or their theories about them. But it would be an almost devilish device that should succeed in persuading a sincere and earnest young preacher, who holds to the main lines of the evangelical faith, that unless he accept some one's theology that calls itself orthodox he will fail as an evangelistic preacher. Men's views on many phases of an evangelical theology have changed and the evangelistic nerve has not been cut, and it may not be cut if they are still further changed. No earnest man, who knows that, despite the dogmatic dictum of the theological partizan, he is in a large and generous sense an evangelical man, holding to the heart of the Gospel, should ever allow himself to be moved from his evangelistic purpose by any theological difficulties or by relatively insignificant variations from the current theology of his time. The preacher who knows that men are sinners, that

they need redemption, that they have it freely and sincerely offered, that men may and should accept it whenever clearly made known to them, and that whenever accepted in an act of self surrender, they enter upon the beginning of a redeemed life that contains the promise and potency of all forms of holy virtue—the man who knows this or who strongly believes it, whatever his opinions with reference to contested and doubtful secondary points of belief, is the man who has a Gospel and he can preach it with effectiveness, if otherwise he have the fitness. And it is greatly to be hoped that in a time of unsettlement no young preacher will be put to confusion or turned aside by his mental perplexities. It is not necessary for one to be omniscient in order to be evangelical, or in order to preach the Gospel of grace to needy men. But it is necessary to believe that one has a Gospel to preach and that men need it here and now. There is no evidence that Paul thought himself omniscient. He was not wholly certain about eschatological questions, and was manifestly fallible in one point of eschatology, about which he was quite confident, the immediate coming of our Lord. But it is generally conceded that he was fairly orthodox and that he preached his Gospel with a fair measure of success.

5. Culture of the religious life. Bad men have sometimes preached effectively. So long as they were believed to be good men, they have won men to Christ. One may for a time conceal his moral unsoundness, and no barrier of doubt in the minds of others may impede the transmission of truth through him. But it is an altogether exceptional thing that a man of immoral and even of unspiritual character, ever succeeds in the preaching of the Gospel. He has neither the capacity to apprehend it aright, nor the motive to present it unselfishly. It is the man of spiritual power that preaches effectively. The spirit of God works through the consecrated energies of the human soul. A fresh religious experience

is sure to impart new moral and spiritual power in the proclamation of the Gospel. The case of Dr. Chalmers is often cited in illustration of this. But this is only one amid unnumbered instances.

6. Culture of the evangelistic spirit, to which reference has already been made, a spirit namely that is consonant with the spirit of the Gospel and with the object for which it is presented. This is more than a spirit of earnest devotion. Many a man of deep and earnest piety has failed with respect to the right evangelistic spirit. Wisdom as well as piety is in demand. Contact with men for the purpose of knowing them and of finding ways to reach them is necessary to the culture of the evangelistic spirit. Men are known individually. Every heart has its own door. Tact in handling men comes of contact; capacity to touch men skillfully is product of touching them practically. Preliminary observation of and contact and acquaintance with successful evangelistic preachers will be of value to any man who sets his heart upon the winning of men. It is a misfortune for any man to begin his pastorate without such preparatory observation and acquaintance. The tone of one's religious services may be made tributary to evangelistic effort. One may not expect to preach evangelistically with success whose conduct of public worship lacks the evangelistic or missionary quality. One's devotional meetings may become a sphere of preliminary training. Brief, direct, earnest prayer and speech further the evangelistic interest. One who has fallen into the habit of long, dull, monotonous circuitous prayer and address will find it hard to work out of them when he comes to put forth direct effort to persuade men.

But the culture of the evangelistic spirit involves preeminently a sense of one's own spiritual needs. This conditions the receptive posture of the soul to the grace of God. All men of evangelistic power have known what Paul meant

when he said, "When I am weak then I am strong." And this includes strong conviction of the needs of other men. No preacher can ever afford to forget that he deals with those who are needy, whether they know it or not, needy in sin and needy in infirmity. It is a strong sense of this need that awakens a great yearning of heart to be helpful in bringing them to Christ.

7. Culture of such homiletic qualities as are adapted to this type of preaching. The cultivation of sound judgment, moral intensity and power of concrete representation and correct taste with reference to the emotional impressions sought, is an important consideration. It is not an easy task to handle a sermon that aims at persuasion. It is easier to teach than to persuade. Persuasion attaches itself to that part of human nature that is most intractable and unreliable, the emotions and the will. It also deals with a class of truths and with moral aims that exact closely upon the conscience, and it has to concern itself with those who may be indifferent or hostile to the claims which the preacher presents, and perhaps indifferent or hostile to the preacher himself. The tone and quality of the themes themselves also with which the evangelistic preacher deals are very exacting upon his powers of persuasion. These themes are the great realities of the religion of redemption. Sometimes they speak as by their own power. There are times in the experience of men when very humble and ineffective agencies may readily transmit these truths and disclose their power. But in general it requires rare skill to greaten what is great and to intensify what is intense, and this is what the evangelistic preacher must do. He must greaten and intensify the claims of the Gospel in the apprehension and in the feelings and convictions of men. These difficulties intensify homiletic exaction. The text is important. It may well be an impressive text and as closely adapted as possible to the nature and object of the sermon.

Harmony of tone is especially desirable. Whatever the character of the text, whether command or claim, promise, cheerful incentive, or solemn admonition and appeal, the right sort of sermon will catch its tone as well as thought and make it effective.

The introduction will be specially solicitous to win and fix attention and interest at the outset. Whatever will make the thought or sentiment or feeling of the text impressive at the start, is a good introduction and whatever makes the occasion, or the theme or the aim of the sermon, or the solicitude of the preacher for his hearers impressive will be good introductory material. The theme, whether causal or final, *i. e.*, whether it give the subject or instead the object of the sermon, will be stated with exceptional simplicity, directness, definiteness, clearness and brevity. Such statement promotes forcefulness and impressiveness.

The outline and discussion demand cumulative impression. If one aims at a decisive result, he naturally aims at a rhetorical climax. Anticlimax is fatal to decisive effects. The conclusion is naturally shorter, more compact and concentrated in form than that of the didactic sermon. The last word will be especially weighty and impressive, and if done naturally and simply and sincerely may well be detached by a slight pause and given with deliberation and emphasis.

The culture of the rhetorical qualities of naturalness and directness is especially important in evangelistic preaching. For even naturalness may be cultivated. These qualities have characterized the style of the great evangelistic preachers, especially directness. This is the style of Mr. Spurgeon and of Mr. Moody, and earlier of Prof. Finney. The style of Whitefield would not be natural in our own day, but it was natural for him, was familiar to his hearers, and in harmony with the rhetorical culture and taste of his age. There is

nothing in the discourses of these great evangelists that insures their perpetuity. But they express what is real to them and they bear the evidence of reality in their directness and pungency. A religious awakening is likely to bring a revival of naturalness, simplicity, directness, compactness and cogency of speech. The very form partakes of the new, fresh life that penetrates it.

Culture of good perspective, of balance of parts, and economy of force, is another important interest. One needs to know not only what to say, but how much and when and where, and how to stop. The adequate evangelistic sermon carries no surplus material. It eliminates padding. It wastes no words. It is dangerous to say too much. He who speaks to the feelings of his hearers may easily cause a revulsion. A little over-doing spoils the impression. Just here, directness of aim becomes the more manifestly important. The preacher who aims straight will keep within bounds.

IV. Evangelistic Motives

The most important study in evangelistic preaching is perhaps the study of motive, or a study of the various methods by which the will is moved. Skill in the use of motive is skill in the art of persuasion. Motive is what moves. What moves men varies. It varies not only with individual men and classes of men at any given period, but it varies with the changing conditions of time. Considerations that move men in one age fail to move them in the new conditions and habits of another age. The field of motive enlarges as men's conceptions of the Christian life enlarge, as their conceptions of Christianity enlarge, and as the Gospel takes broader and more varied relations with the lives of men in the changes of time. The age in which we live is one of vast complexity. The experiences of men are conditioned by this complexity. There is a greater variety

in religious experience than was once the case. There is larger range in the types of religious experience. There are more ways recognized and made available of bringing men to Christ. The parable of the hidden treasure and that of the merchantman suggest and were designed to suggest variety in the ways by which men enter the kingdom of God. They thus suggest the varieties of motive to which men are subject. Dr. R. W. Dale in his Yale Lectures* has touched upon this subject in an interesting manner and has directed attention to some of the evangelistic motives that are especially available in our day. I shall touch a portion of the ground he has traversed, but only a portion. Let us undertake to classify some of the motives that are available in the evangelism of our day.

1. There is what may be called the intellectual motive. Some men are much more easily reached than others by the presentation of the truth convincingly to the mind, particularly by the presentation of Christ as the one who answers certain intellectual needs and meets their intellectual difficulties. To convince the mind is the surest way to reach the hearts, consciences and wills of some men. Convincement is the larger part of persuasion. Most men know Christ as the source and inspiration of life. But there are those for whom Christ as "the truth" has supreme attraction. It is important for the preacher to know that Christ may be preached evangelistically as "the truth," the truth of God, the truth of man, the truth of life. Christianity is the great and the only adequate religious interpreter of the being and character of God, of the exaltation and worth of humanity and of the inner meaning of the world and of life. The Christian world-view is the only one that can satisfy not only the hearts and consciences but the higher intelligence of thoughtful, serious-minded men. It answers to that sense

*Nine Lectures on Preaching, page 204 ff.

of moral value which is not only an ethical instinct but an intellectual conception. The Gospel that bears the name of John was the early response of Christianity to the intellectual needs of men in the realm of religion. Not only in substance but in form it was peculiarly fitted to meet the needs of all those who in that early age sought a deeper knowledge of God and of his Christ. In many of its fundamental conceptions it is adapted to the mental needs of men in every age, and is far more significant for the intellectual as well as spiritual necessities of the church than many of the critics know. There have been a few modern evangelists, notably the late Professor Drummond, who have presented Christ with great success to intellectual and cultivated men. The older preachers always sought to make a strong, clear mental impression before they could hope to make the requisite ethical and emotional impression. They presented the claims of Christianity to the mind. They plied the intellectual motive. And just here apologetic preaching becomes evangelistic preaching, or enters into close alliance with it. It may become more and more necessary to make evangelistic preaching apologetic in a sort, especially, as in the preaching of Prof. Drummond, in effort to win educated young men. As mental life in the realm of religion develops and as men come under the power of modern culture, it will be necessary to appeal to the higher intelligence, to the higher mental wants and to urge those motives that reach the will through the mind.

2. The æsthetic motive. That the realm of religion lies contiguous to the realm of æsthetics is an altogether familiar fact. No modern religious teacher has more clearly conceived the relation, or more attractively interpreted it, than Frederick W. Robertson. That the realm of the ethical and of the æsthetic also are closely allied has been made apparent by modern philosophical writers. It is the teaching of

Ulrici* that the primal sense of moral obligation is both ethical and æsthetic. There lingers in the soul of every human being an ideal of what one ought to be and the conscious or unconscious striving for self-realization is but the striving for the realization of this ideal, however dimly or however clearly defined it may be. This notion of the "ought" then, which involves the notion of a striving of the soul for the realization of a moral goal, is both ethical and æsthetic. A right character is not only the realization of moral rectitude but of moral beauty. It is easy to see that the sense of an ideal goodness is both ethical and æsthetic. There are those who have a strong sense of the attractions of goodness. They carry about with them an ideal of what God intended them to be. This ideal of manhood lingers with them and haunts them. Conscience condemns them for failure to realize the standard that is set for them. Their lives are, therefore, lives of self-dissatisfaction. It is largely this that distinguishes men of high and of low type of possible manhood. A Christian civilization nurtures this sense of ideal goodness. It is thus that men of the finer mould, who are subject to such elevating influences, are the more easily reached by the presentation of Christ as the embodiment of the loftiest ideal of human goodness. It is the moral beauty of the character and life of Christ that will draw such men to him. There is perhaps a broader field today for the use of such a motive especially among educated young men and women, who have been the subjects of early Christian nurture, than in former periods.

3. The paracletic motive. The sorrows, disappointments, hardships and dissatisfactions of life prepare many for the reception of Christ as the one who brings comfort, strength and peace. There are in our day increasingly large numbers of those who carry great burdens in life, who are

*Gott und der Meusch. Zweiter Theil. Einletung III Seite 68 ff.

wearied and dissatisfied with life and who seriously entertain the question whether it is "worth living." Doubtless the external conditions of men in all civilized and prosperous countries is constantly bettering. It is doubtless true that the "rich are growing richer," but there is no basis for the cry, which has become a species of sentimental cant, that the "poor are growing poorer." Doubtless they know their poverty and feel it and are discontented with it as never before, but the very dissatisfaction is an accompaniment of bettered conditions. The dissatisfactions of life are increasing. While the outer conditions of life are bettering, the inner life is more restless and burdened, even among those whose lives are otherwise full of comfort. It is said to be a matter of observation that the sufferings and hardships of life do not to any large extent bring men to Christ, that they harden rather than soften them and make them responsive to the call of God's grace and compassion. The attitude of the broken-down section of society towards religion seems to confirm this. But it is possible that the comforting Christ is not brought to such men as he might be and should be, and it is certainly true that in the case of a great many the sufferings of life condition a certain religious susceptibility to the influences of a higher world, and it were a very serious mistake for a shepherd of souls to assume that the victim of life's hardships can not to any considerable extent be led into a longing for higher forms of good, for peace with God and for the assurance of heavenly blessedness.

4. The emotional motive. There are those who may be reached by an appeal to fear. It has proved itself to be a powerful motive, and it still may be effective. It is a legitimate motive and was freely used by our Lord himself. Men need to be warned of the results of sin, not to their characters alone, but to their happiness. Christ appealed to a love of the higher well-being. It is said that men in our day are

not responsive to this motive. Doubtless they are not responsive to it as it was once presented. But there never was a time when the consequences of sin could be more powerfully and effectively presented than now, and it is idle to suppose that human nature has so radically changed and that men have so wholly lost all sense of well-being that they cannot be made to dread sin and its consequences when they are properly presented to them. The preacher need not deal with visions of the future wrath of God against sin in order to lead men to dread it. He has only to deal with its present consequences; he has only to deal with the facts, the awful facts of life. No imaginative picture of future wrath can equal the appalling facts of present ruin.

Yet in itself fear is not a moral motive. There is no more virtue in dreading suffering of soul than there is in dreading suffering of body. No one is ever morally changed by the influence of fear alone. The value of it as a motive is that it arrests for a time the wrong action of the soul and gives opportunity for other motives to take hold. But it is these other motives, operating unconsciously or half-unconsciously it may be, that do the work. A man can never be simply frightened away from sin into a life of holy virtue. A love for the soul's true good itself must first spring up in the heart because it is recognized as such. One may be startled in his bad way so as to be made afraid of God. But no one is ever a changed man morally simply by being made afraid of God. One may be terrified at the consequences of sin, but if he does not come to hate it, he will not turn from it. Fear, however, may give faith and love a chance to become operative in the soul. Dread of results in suffering may at last lead one to hate the sin that causes the suffering, that is hateful in itself, and hateful to God. But he who still tolerates sin in his heart and is only afraid of its consequences will still adventure in his bad way, and

will dare the worst, notwithstanding his dread. Such a man is not a changed man, nor will fear alone ever change him.

But there are those who are less responsive to the motive of fear than to motives of an opposite character. They may be moved by an appeal to the heart. There are those who always, even from early years, seem to live under a sort of constraint from the love of Christ or are at special periods peculiarly responsive to it. The pathos of his sorrow and of his suffering love has been a mighty power in the evangelism of the church. Periods of religious awakening have attested its power as a motive. The mystical preachers of the church of Rome, St. Bernard, Berthold, Francis of Assisi, attest it. Witness also the pietistic preachers of the Protestant churches. Recall the Moravian Zinsendorf, whose motto was, "I have but one passion, it is He and He only." The sufferings of the Redeemer have been a prominent theme in Moravian preaching and have demonstrated their power to nurture the feelings and affections. We may not forget that the great Schliermacher was in early years a pupil in schools of Moravian piety, where the suffering love of Christ was powerfully delineated, and that this nurture shaped his future life. We may not forget that Frederick W. Robertson and John Henry Newman were educated in the pietistic school of Anglican Evangelicanism, the school that laid great emphasis in its theology and its preaching upon the suffering love of Christ. The marvelous success of the Methodist Church in its evangelistic work is due in large measure to its powerful presentation of this motive. From the founding of this church and ever on, the love of God, as disclosed in the cross of Christ, has been the favorite theme of its preachers. Few preachers in any age have equalled Bishop Simpson in power of pathos in dealing with the love of the crucified Redeemer. and with the glory and blessedness of the

heavenly life as the crown of our earthly conflict in the fellowship of his sufferings. These were the motives he liked most to urge. When he reached them in his discourses he always rose to the supreme height of a well-balanced eloquence and was then at his best. Here he showed himself to be at home and was able to sustain himself in the most exalted flights of emotional eloquence, as in a genuine inspiration. His very diction became more simple and natural and forceful, and even more exact. Henry Ward Beecher, especially in the early years of his ministry, had amazing power over the hearts of men. His first and mid-period preaching had an evangelical tone which that of the later period lacked. The motives which he urged and which were appropriated as the product of his own religious experiences were those that appeal to the heart, and they mightily searched the hearts to which they appealed. In his later life he aspired to be the teacher rather than inspirer of men and there was a distinct loss in that power which was distinctively his own. A favorite method of fostering the religious life in the Roman Catholic church, to which there is something corresponding in some of the Protestant churches, is the "retreat." Its prevailing method is to keep before the mind, and largely through pictures for the imagination, the sufferings of Christ. An increase in such measures for quickening and chastening the Christian life might be profitable in all the churches of our day. How has it come about that so much of the preaching that we hear fails to move the heart? Is it that preachers are losing their hold of the religion of redemption, losing their hold of the heart of religion, losing the dynamic of suffering love in the inculcation of a Christianity which is summarized as a law of life, whose chief significance is the exaction of moral tasks rather than as a revelation of the grace of God? Is it connected with the fact that the evangelistic type of preaching is not

cultivated as once it was? And if so, why is this? Is it that, in the siftings and eliminations of our critical processes, the irreducible remainder of our Christianity appears as only a system of ethics? The culture of our day is largely intellectual, æsthetic and ethical. The religious feelings and affections are not adequately cultured. And why is this? Are we perhaps cultivating ourselves away from the heart's purest and sublimest inspirations?

5. The moral motive. It is possible to work directly upon the results of the early training of the conscience, upon a trained sense of obligation to Christ, in which the conscience has been precommitted. And it is here that the moral allies itself with the æsthetic motive, or a sense of moral obligation with a sense of the attractiveness of the Christian life. The value of early religious education is conspicuous here. It creates a conscience for Christ. It precommits the moral nature and secures a bias towards him. There are those who can be reached by appeal to a certain sense of honor, to a moral sentiment and judgment that respects a character and life that are worthy of a man, and the possibilities that are opened up in Christ before them. The very fact that men are called to be the children of God, that in all their degradation they are his children, the very height of the calling, the very vastness of the fact, here is an appeal to manhood. It is a motive that should appeal to any manly young man. The contrast between what one is of right and privilege, and what one has become in fact—what one was made to be and called to be and what one has made oneself—is a startling contrast. Aspiration is awakened by opening up the hopes of the Gospel. Christ won men largely by showing them that in him a better manhood is possible. Assurance of the good stirs the consciousness of the bad. It was the returning consciousness of sonship and the hope of welcome as a son at the old home that won the prodigal, and

the power of the parable is in its illustration of this possibility of a recovered child and home consciousness.

6. The social motive. Personal example, various forms of personal influence, are powerful factors in winning men to Christ. The social motive is strong in early years. It operates powerfully in periods of religious awakening. In all evangelistic effort in the interest of the young this should never be forgotten. That one shares with others a common good makes it easier to appropriate it as a personal good. The dread of losing the power of a sacred social influence, of being left behind and alone by the comrades one loves, the conviction that the accepted time and the day of salvation is the time when God makes it easy by the power of coöperating sympathies to yield allegiance to Christ. All this is operative in the evangelistic interest. And there are always those in any community where the fruits of Christian education abound, who, more sensitively conscientious than others, reflect regretfully upon their own past influence, and who wish to make amends therefor. The possibility that one may influence others to enter the Christian life, and that one may be measurably responsible for others' failure, is a potent motive to a manly youth. Recall the case of Dr. Horace Bushnell, who returned to his own allegiance to Christ under the pressure of a burdening sense of social responsibility as a teacher of college men. It is a singularly interesting illustration of the power of the social conscience in a man of tremendous personal force and of unique individuality. In a time when the social aspects of Christian morality are so strongly accentuated and when men are made to feel their social obligations, it is a motive that may be urged with great effectiveness. The attractions of a common service in the kingdom of God was a motive which Prof. Drummond urged with skill and power in his evangelistic effort on behalf of educated young men. This was the distinctive fea-

ture in the evangelism of the Rev. B. Fay Mills. It was surely not the failure of his evangelistic method that brought about his retirement from the evangelistic field.

The motives above outlined, of course blend and co-operate. Many streams of influence flow into the current of any man's Christian life. Combinations of motive are necessary to move men. To find out to what motives men are most likely to respond is the evangelistic preacher's task. He must study men, not only masses of men, but individual men. He needs to study the use of motive by successful evangelistic preachers. Pastoral knowledge is tributary to pastoral evangelism, and here the professional evangelist is at a certain disadvantage.

CHAPTER V

TYPES OF SERMON DELIVERY

The best method of sermon delivery, best in general or best for any particular preacher, can not be determined off hand. No one method is universally best. One method is best in one respect and for one man; another best in another respect and for another man. Each has its advantages. It is a concrete question, not to be answered by an appeal to general principles. It is settled at last by experiment. But in applying the test of experiment some general considerations may come into discussion.

The personality of the preacher is a consideration of importance. A preacher's method, and his success in it, here as elsewhere, depend on the peculiarities of his endowment and training. There are certain habits of mind that are better adapted to one than to another method. There are also questions of temperament that demand recognition. Gifts of speech or lack of such gifts, are to be considered. One's physical condition in general or at any particular time is not an insignificant matter. One's personal training demands recognition. A preacher may easily become a slave to a particular method, so as to become incapacitated for any other, although originally as well fitted for one as for another. Scottish and New England preachers have furnished many examples of this tyranny of habit. There are preachers who never discover their possibilities till they are pushed to the test.

The subject or theme of the sermon demands considera-

tion. Some themes are more easily, more appropriately and more successfully presented in one than in another method.

The object of the sermon challenges attention. The question may always well be raised; can I accomplish my purpose best by writing out fully what I have to say and reading it, or by carefully thinking my subject through and trusting to the occasion for its rhetorical form, or by writing and memorizing, in whole or in part, or can I best realize my aim by combining the three methods?

The character of the audience may determine the answer to the question. The exceptionally intelligent and cultivated audience perhaps generally prefers and is best edified by the sermon that is written and read, or memorized. This is not always the case. But in some sections of the United States it is true. The audience of only average intelligence, however, generally prefers the extemporaneous method. One would hardly take a manuscript into a country school house, or town hall, or opera house or camp meeting. The character and conditions of the audience would forbid it. Bishop Brooks was a manuscript preacher, but before a promiscuous audience he almost never appeared with his manuscript. He knew that he could speak more effectively without it. And yet this is largely a matter of habit and custom. Some of the most intelligent and cultivated audiences are adapting themselves to extemporaneous preaching. The whole question is relative. There is no absolutely best method.

But let us take up the three methods in succession and consider their claims and limitations. The subject has been very fully discussed, there is a great amount of literature bearing upon it, and there is no need of entering upon it at length.

I. The Manuscript Type

We will consider its conditions of value and its limitations.

1. The use of the manuscript seems to be best adapted to the mental bias, habit and training of some preachers. It is also best adapted to their literary style and general habit of preaching. The late Prof. George Shepard of Bangor Theological Seminary is an illustration. His mental movement was deliberate and strong. Until aroused by his subject and audience, he was a little heavy. He was exceptionally grave, serious and impressive. His style was compact and forceful and rose to a high elevation of emotional vigor at the end of the sermon. It was concentrated energy. It was his purpose to handle the commonly-accepted truths of evangelical Christianity in such a way as to make them as effective as possible upon the heart and conscience, and so upon the will. He trained himself carefully along this line. His speech was, in extraordinary measure, concentrated, direct, forcible, but deliberate, weighty, dignified. He never threw himself out upon the broader, freer lines of movement, never gave himself wide range, but aimed straight at a near and definite centre. It is difficult for any one who understood the character of his preaching to imagine that he could have been as effective without as he was with the manuscript. There was an interesting correspondence between the quality of his thought, his diction and his elocution, and it was the manuscript that largely conditioned that correspondence.

The essay type of mental habit, if one may so call it, is in general best served by the use of the manuscript. The mind that deals naturally and habitually with the minute details of thought, that does not grasp it in its broad outlines, nor hold it in close relation, but moves freely from one thought to another along the line of relatively remote suggestion, always takes kindly to the manuscript. This is the reason doubtless why Emerson was always obliged to read his ad-

dress and could never even memorize it. Considering his mental habit, his habit of producing and writing, it is just what we might expect. It was for much the same reason, perhaps, that Chalmers was a manuscript preacher. His sermons were rhetorical and oratorical essays, close-wrought and defective with respect to broad, clear, bold outlines.

One can readily see why the late Prof. Swing of Chicago and why Dr. Parkhurst of New York must use the manuscript. They belong to the class of pulpit essayists. Their discourses are essays turned measurably into the form of addresses. The manuscript is of value to the preacher of abstract habits of thought, *i. e.*, whose mind deals habitually with abstract truth. It is of value to the preacher whose temperament is phlegmatic, whose speech is slow moving, the preacher who, like the late Canon Mozley, lacks linguistic facility. It is difficult to conceive of Mozley as anything but a manuscript preacher. It is of value for the discourse in which close and discriminating thought is demanded, whose object is the elucidation of a difficult subject, and the edification of intelligent hearers by increase of knowledge. In all cases where exceptional exactness of conception and of statement is demanded and where the success of the sermon depends on such exactness the manuscript is desirable. There are but very few extemporaneous preachers that can speak with an exactness equal to that of the manuscript preacher. I venture the suggestion that the manuscript promotes variety in preaching. It does not tend to a uniform and stereotyped method as does the extemporaneous habit. Compare Robertson with Bushnell in this regard. Robertson's variety is in the substance of his thought. His method is stereotyped. Bushnell has variety in both substance and form. The manuscript sermon is likely to anchor itself more closely to the text than the extemporaneous sermon. It is careful study of the text and close adherence to it that will secure a de-

velopment that is pertinent to it and to the subject deduced, and thus we have a variety corresponding to the variety of texts and subjects. The manuscript sermon is generally the more carefully prepared, and it is the more carefully prepared discourse that is likely to have a character and form of its own. The less carefully prepared sermon is likely to take the form with which the mind of the preacher has become familiar and in connection with which it works most easily and readily, because of this familiarity with a limited number of topics. In the written sermon the development runs out more fully into the details of thought. Thought is more fully expanded. This expansion of thought conditions variety of thought. The farther one strikes out from the main stream of thought into the back country, the more rivulets of thought he taps. The farther one gets into a mine the more wide-ranging run the veins. It is in part perhaps for this reason that the manuscript sermon is likely to meet a larger variety of needs. It is perhaps possible for the preacher to sustain himself longer in a parish with a manuscript if properly used, than without it. The superior literary form of the manuscript sermon is one of the stock arguments for it. He is a rare extemporaneous preacher who can express himself in as good literary form as the manuscript preacher. The value of this superior literary form will of course depend on the use that is made of it. If it fosters a tendency to make the sermon an end, an artistic product rather than an effective rhetorical instrument, it is pernicious. But in any event the written sermon has an advantage in the clearness that follows deliberation and exactness of statement, in the forcefulness that follows conciseness of statement, and in the finish that belongs to the more carefully wrought product. A larger number of good literary qualities are cultivated by the use of the manuscript. It is for this reason that the written product abides. Extemporaneous ser-

mons generally are short-lived. It is to a large extent the literary quality of sermons that gives them perpetuity. In so far as the possession of the manuscript in the pulpit insures deliberation and self-poise and self-assurance and ease of mind, it becomes tributary to an edifying public worship. The man who takes his manuscript into the pulpit will leave his homiletic burdens behind. He who carries his sermon in his mind and carries anxiety and perplexity with it, cannot be wholly at his ease or at home either in preaching or in the conduct of worship. These are all familiar defenses of the manuscript. They are all at best relative and one-sided. They show clearly enough how much may be said for it. But it is possible that most of these defenses may be counter-weighted by arguments in favor of other methods, and especially by its own limitations.

2. Limitations of the manuscript. Its physical limitations. It is a tax upon physical energy. The men who break down in the ministry are largely slaves of the pen. The men who do their work at night are generally the manuscript preachers. Protracted work under great physical disadvantages, such as are involved in the writing and reading of sermons, will sap a man's energies.

Its intellectual limitations. It consumes time that might be given to broader study and training. The manuscript slave cannot grow as he otherwise might. He is likely to become a mere sermonizer, a sermon monger, and to lose the influence that a broader culture might secure. He is an authority upon no subject, because he does not find or give himself time for thorough investigation and study. This is one of the chief reasons why men of intellectual aspirations are in our day emancipating themselves from such servitude.

Its possible moral limitations. The preacher who always writes and reads his sermons easily overestimates the literary or artistic form. In so far as this is the case, the proper

ethical aim of preaching may be lost sight of. Hence defect in the moral purpose of the preacher. Excessive devotion to form limits moral aim and moral power. Thus the sermon fails to do its work. In times of religious awakening the manuscript is likely to disappear, in part and for a time at least. Any method of preaching may of course have its moral limitations. But the moral limitation of an excessive artistic ideal is peculiarly the product of manuscript preaching.

Its oratorical limitations. The reading of a manuscript limits a man's oratorical powers. The limitation of posture, pantomime, use of eye and of vocal organs is evident. It is pretty sure that the conversational tone and method which are normal for the public speaker, are more readily cultivated by the extemporaneous preacher. One talks straight at his audience. Hence it is a more natural method of preaching. It is pretty sure also that the emotions have freer play.

Its professional limitations. Enslavement to the manuscript limits the influence of the pulpit in these democratic days. Pulpit oratory can not hold its own with other forms of oratory. The greatest triumphs of oratory have been in the field of free utterance. The pulpit can never reach its best till it is emancipated. Everybody likes to see a public man stand up in a free, manly way, and say out what is in him to say in a straight manner. The manuscript is relatively modern. It is on the whole the exceptional thing. In the early church it was wholly unknown. Dr. Dale says that the arguments are overwhelmingly against it. This is too strong a statement perhaps. For there is a place for the manuscript. It originated in an honest effort to better the teaching quality of the pulpit. It accentuates its didactic function. It is not a perversion. It has been perverted and overdone. It has been made tributary to agnosticism, naturalism, and dogmatic orthodoxy. The evangelistic spirit

of Methodism has dealt it some heavy blows, and its power is broken. But its origin is not anti-Christian, and it has had a powerful and beneficial reign. Equal results could not have been accomplished without it. The pulpit of the last three centuries, indeed of the last six centuries, would have been the weaker without it, and modern theological and religious literature would have been impoverished. But a change has come. The pulpit returns to the earlier method of freedom. It gives full scope to all the preacher's powers. The energies of his personality will never find full expression in the pulpit till he is emancipated from the slavery of the pen. Personality as the organ of truth and of the spirit of truth, is at its best only when free. The preacher needs a chance to throw into his speech all his power of feeling and of will, evoked and inspired by the audience and the occasion as well as of thought evoked and inspired by the truth. Fettered to the manuscript he is often like a chained eagle, flapping his wings and striving to soar, but held in restraint. The will, especially, can not have full, free play upon an audience with the manuscript. One can hardly conceive of a thoroughly successful evangelistic preacher in our day as subject to its restraint.

But the manuscript will still be used and within limits should be used. How then may it be used to best advantage? It is clear enough that a manuscript sermon is not properly written to be read, to be read as an essay or a book is read. It is properly written for delivery, and should be delivered. A product prepared as an address is very different from one prepared as an essay, or a treatise. The Scotch have been accustomed to call the manuscript sermon "the book" and appropriately, for Scottish sermons are often read as a book is read. Chalmers did not read, although he held to the manuscript, and it was the glow of his rhetoric and the fiery enthusiasm of this delivery that rescued it from ineffectiveness. Bishop Brooks has spoken of "extemporaneous writing," and

he himself was an example of extemporaneousness in the best sense. It is possible to write with nearly as much freedom as one would speak extemporaneously, and without the defects of the extemporaneous form. This should be the aim of the manuscript preacher. It is possible to give the sermon an easy, natural, colloquial, flexible movement. One who prepares with the audience in mind and as if he were actually addressing an audience will realize this result. One who thus writes will write with deliberation but with fervor, and in subsequently pruning the manuscript he will not cut into the quick. Of course one can not deliver a sermon that can not be easily read, that is not written in clear, bold hand, and properly paragraphed, nor can it be read unless the preacher is perfectly familiar with it. It doubtless requires some effort to deliver a manuscript sermon naturally, but it is a goal that may be reached. One may at last speak almost as naturally, as simply, as directly and as freely with a manuscript or without it. If the sermon is written with rhetorical freedom and with reference to delivery, it will invite the conversational type of address which only is normal for the public speaker.

II. The Extemporaneous Type

The term extemporaneous has considerable range. It is sometimes applied to the address that is premeditated both as to thought and diction, and that is reproduced as prepared, although not in strictest sense memorized. There are public speakers, or have been, who are able to reproduce their products in about the same language in which they were thought out and without conscious effort. The speeches of Wendell Phillips seemed to be of this sort. And such perhaps were the speeches of Edward Everett. Of course no sermon can be premeditated as to its substance without relation to its rhetorical form. For thought takes shape in words. But it is the sermon that is

not reproduced in the pulpit in the exact literary form in which it first shaped itself, that is properly called extemporaneous—extemporaneous at least in the commonly-accepted sense. The great amount that has been written upon this subject would render a full discussion gratuitous and unprofitable. I venture only a few suggestions with respect to the conditions of success in this type of preaching.

1. Among the mental conditions must be named a habit of clear, discriminating thought. Necessary in all preaching, it is preëminently so here. The extemporaneous preacher has three problems to master, three that are of special importance, the problem of discriminating, the problem of relating and the problem of expressing thought. Any man who has analytic skill, and trains himself to discriminate clearly, who has the ability to grasp his subject in its main and subordinate features and to relate and develop them in an orderly manner, who can express himself readily, clearly and forcibly, may make an extemporaneous preacher, if he have the ordinary susceptibility of feeling and oratorical impulse. Upon all these conditions the exercise of memory, of imagination and of feeling largely depends. But of all these requisites, mental discrimination is of chief or at least of primal importance. A muddy thinker needs the homiletic crutch.

Consider for a moment again the value of mental range. It is natural that the extemporaneous preacher should give himself pretty free scope in the development of his theme. The written product generally has a narrower field, because it deals with the finer points of the subject and develops them more fully. Productiveness and range are the salient qualities in Henry Ward Beecher's preaching, and the former is connected with the latter. The theme opens broadly, the main topics contain a large amount of matter and spring naturally and readily from the subject and are always such as can be discussed in an extemporaneous manner. If one finds himself

shut up within narrow bounds and is forced to close work in the development of material, he is likely to find that he lacks the requisite facility and freedom of mental action, which would be quickened in a larger field of thought. One can take a single complete thought whose elements are closely related and write about it more easily than he can speak about it without writing. It is easy to reproduce upon one's feet a wide-ranging, methodically-outlined sermon shaped in the form of a rhetorical address. It is this ease of reproduction that conditions success in the extemporaneous and I may add the memorative sermon. Just here, however, is one of the possible defects of this type of preaching. There is a temptation to generalize too widely, to cultivate breadth at cost of depth, thoroughness, and definiteness. One may easily form the habit of dealing with topics that are too big and general without thinking the subject through. One thus becomes thin in proportion to his range. But the general principle is valid. Free-ranging and orderly-related and developed thought is a pre-requisite of extemporaneous preaching. One can see why Robert Hall should have been a successful extemporaneous preacher. He took a broad survey of a subject and discussed it in its logical relations. Compare him with John Foster, the "essay preacher." One can not think of Edmund Burke as dependent on a manuscript. The habit of extemporaneous speech cultivates the mental habit above specified, and with good results, provided thoroughness and insight are associated with breadth.

A judicious selection of texts and themes is important for the extemporaneous preacher. Texts and themes differ, as previously suggested, in their adaptation to extemporaneous preaching. Of course men differ, and what may be difficult for one may be easy for another. Familiarity with the theme, whether difficult or not, or whether adapted to the extemporaneous method or not, is also an important consideration. But

some texts and themes are in their nature better adapted to all classes of extemporaneous preachers. For example, texts that are readily developed after the textual method are in general better adapted to extemporaneous preaching than those texts that call for topical development. In the effort to train oneself in the extemporaneous method one may well begin with the textual development. The theme that calls for exhaustive treatment naturally asks for the manuscript. The theme that justifies the suggestive method of development, the outline of which calls for free handling rather than exhaustive expansion, naturally asks for the extemporaneous form.

No extemporaneous preacher will ever succeed without such thorough mastery of his subject as gives him a free and familiar handling of it. Scarcity of material will never do here. The preacher needs a surplus. "To him that hath shall be given and he shall have more abundantly. But from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have." Preaching of this type must be free. Constraint is homiletic paralysis. Only the master can be free. It is a great joy to preach when one knows that he is ready for it. Temptation to negligence and to inadequate preparation is no objection to the method but to a failure to meet its demands. There is no excuse for a negligence that results in a superficial, stereotyped, slavish, diffuse method of preaching that lacks all freshness and fullness. The temptation to neglect should put one upon his guard.

The cultivation of the homiletic mind is of special importance to the extemporaneous preacher. The manuscript preacher is not so dependent on the habit of storing material and turning it into the homiletic mill. He can work slowly; he can wait. But the extemporaneous preacher must rely upon material that is abundant and ready at hand. One of the arguments for this method is that it is promotive of the habit

of constant preparation under all conditions. The man who turns all the material of thought, gathered from a thousand sources into homiletic pabulum is pretty sure, like Henry Ward Beecher, to be an extemporaneous preacher.

2. Among the rhetorical conditions of success is a concrete habit of mind. It is in the realm of the concrete that the mind moves most freely without a manuscript. It furnishes images for the imagination, and intensifies the action of the emotions. The abstract thinker needs a manuscript. French preachers naturally follow the free method for the reason that they are natural rhetoricians and orators, who are familiar with concrete realities that appeal to feeling and imagination. Connected with this is the culture of the oratorical temperament. The preacher who is not responsive to his audience will need the pulpit crutch. But the man who, while he is self-poised and deliberate and does not allow his emotions to dominate or conquer him, is sympathetic with his hearers and readily responds to impressions from them, is the one who succeeds here. A free and facile use of language is a necessary element in the equipment of the extemporaneous preacher. The lack of linguistic facility drives one to the manuscript. Such facility is dependent on many things, on the character of one's mental movement, and on temperament. The Frenchman's mental and temperamental habits fit his for this type of speech. In linguistic gifts he is in general superior to the German, English and American preacher. But all this is largely a matter of culture. A large and varied vocabulary is important. The vocabulary of the pulpit is in general too limited. That of the average extemporaneous preacher is probably more limited than that of the manuscript preacher. The latter is likely to exercise more care in the choice of diction. The free preacher needs especially to be a diligent student of language. A general habit of accuracy of speech is tributary to extemporaneous power. Writing

cultivates this. The best free speech rests upon the manuscript. Writing has laid the foundation. Most preachers who have succeeded here have begun with the manuscript. Mr. Beecher and Dr. R. S. Storrs are examples. Good habits of speech in daily intercourse, even with the illiterate, will stand by one in the pulpit. The lack of such habits will disclose itself in spite of oneself.

3. As to ethical conditions, which are among the must significant, must be named a strong and earnest purpose to realize as fully as possible the legitimate results of one's ministry. Of course all preachers, whatever their method, need this and are supposed to have it. But the man who is supremely bent on reaching men and on bringing them into subjection to the truth, and especially the evangelistic preacher, will be supremely solicitious with respect to the question of method in approaching them. I incline to the opinion that the extemporaneous sermon is especially dependent on the preacher's moral earnestness. One may hold an audience by a thoughtful, lucid, elegant essay-like style of manuscript preaching. But it is difficult to see how an extemporaneous preacher, who must measurably sacrifice literary excellence, can hold his audience and do the work he should do, without making a strong impression of moral power. It is he who should have by preëminence the mark of moral force. A strong moral purpose will quicken and ennoble the action of all the faculties. Concentrated force of will, power of feeling and affection and the vigor of a strong and healthy conscience should disclose themselves preëminently in this type of preaching, and if the preaching be of the right sort, they will disclose themselves. The man who preaches on this wise gets nearest to his audience and subjects them to his power. He can be tremendously wrought upon by his hearers. He commits himself to his hearers with self-abandonment. He is lifted into self-forgetfulness and into moral elevation and effectiveness in such sort

as the man who is chained down to a manuscript may not be. Connected with the above is a strong purpose to succeed in this method of speech. A thorough trial of it, and a prompt beginning are to be recommended. Many begin too late, fail to put it to the full proof and give it up before they have demonstrated that they can not succeed in it. The testimony of those who are committed in principle to the method and who begin early is worth considering. Preaching without manuscript half the time from the very first will probably realize the best results. One will have better matter, better method, better style, and in general better habits of carefulness, thoroughness and facility in preaching by following both methods for a considerable period of time.

Training in self-possession is an important feature in extemporaneous preaching. And this is an ethical consideration. Moral purpose has much to do with the handling of oneself and of one's subject in the pulpit.* He who forgets himself in the subject that masters him and in the object at which he aims will win freedom. One's general habit of self-command, which is a moral achievement, will stand by one and save one from the embarrassments that bring confusion. Physical conditions are involved here. The extemporaneous preacher should have special care to enter the pulpit, in just as good physical condition as possible. But it is moral purpose that is above all else important. A sense of vocation, responsiveness to the power of the truth, love and devotion to one's fellow men; these are conditions of free utterance.

Special spiritual preparation, always important in entering the pulpit, is especially so for the extemporaneous preacher, for it is a condition of self-possession and of freedom and cogency of speech. He who is lifted into a great height of spiritual inspiration is a free man. The extemporaneous preacher needs the tranquillity of the upper realm. He is

*See Dr. Alexander's Thoughts on Preaching, page 165.

subject to many disturbing influences. He needs the uplift of spiritual power to place him above them. It is conceivable that one may enter the pulpit in such condition of spiritual freedom and power that no earthly influence can disturb him.

III. The Memoriter Type

There is more to be said in favor of memoriter preaching than might at first be supposed. It is the least common of all methods, and there is a good deal of prejudice against it, especially among American preachers, who rarely make use of it. But it may be advocated as a desirable method in the occasional or exceptional sermon, where freedom of delivery may be combined with carefulness, thoroughness and accuracy of thought and diction, and in the use of old written sermons, which may be freshened by the free introduction of new material along the old line of thought.

In defense of this method it should first of all be recalled that it has proved successful in the hands of some of the best preachers of the church. Witness the preachers of the German, French and to a limited extent of the Scottish church. Tholuck, Christlieb, Lacordaire, Massilion, Vinet, Monod, Coquerel, Guthrie. Whether they would have been as effective in any other method may be doubted, certainly not in the use of the manuscript. It is not an impracticable method. It is not difficult to acquire facility in the use of memory. Secular orators, like Charles Sumner, as well as preachers, have not only begun their public careers but continued and ended them by carefully writing and memorizing their speeches.

It combines thoroughness with freedom, precision with impressiveness, finish with force. And this is the common argument for it. The material of the sermon is well digested and the literary form good. At the same time the preacher can adjust himself to the occasion by interjecting fresh material without disturbing the course of thought, as Dr. Guthrie fre-

quently did. The more thorough the previous preparation has been, the more readily suggestive of fresh material it will be. It is this thoroughness of preparation, which lies back of freedom in delivery, that naturally commends it to German and Scotch preachers. It is its freedom and finish upon a groundwork of well-digested material that naturally commends it to French preachers. The time and labor of committal are the chief objections. But the memory may be trained to do its work with wonderful facility and rapidity. What takes at first parts of three or four days, is at last easily accomplished in an hour on Sunday morning as in the case of Prof. Christlieb and of Dr. Guthrie. The objection made by Dr. Robinson that the task cultivates the memory disportionately, injuring the powers of imagination, of feeling, judgment and of productive thought, by concentrating too much energy upon the work of remembering, is hardly supported by experience. If one writes with reference to delivery without the manuscript and with the audience in mind, writes as he would speak in his best manner, with a free hand, and with clear outline, he will easily memorize it and without any disproportionate exercise of memory. Memory may be so cultivated as to act with unembarrassed freedom. The mere act of remembering in course of time becomes wholly insignificant, so insignificant that one is hardly conscious of it as an effort. And this may answer the objection that the memoriter sermon always betrays itself and can not have the same effect upon an audience that an extemporaneous sermon has. The objection assumes that one will never be able to free oneself from the appearance of effort in memorizing, and that it will always seem like a recitation. If this were true, it would doubtless be a fatal objection. But this is not a necessary result. The alleged fact that the memoriter sermon is soon forgotten is adduced as evidence that the mind is injured by the process of memorizing. It is assumed that it must be an unnatural and so injurious process,

else it would not be so easily forgotten. But this proves too much. That one easily forgets is no proof that the process which secured the transient result to the memory was unnatural and injurious. But the truth of the assertion that the memoriter sermon is easily forgotten, more easily by implication than other types of sermon, may be challenged. It is at any rate true that it is very easily recalled.

One of the defects of the manuscript sermon, in the hands of a preacher especially who lacks rhetorical and oratorical impulse, is its temptation to run into an over-didactic discussion and into an essay method. It is written to be read, not delivered. It is thus likely to lack the rhetorical and oratorical quality that belongs to an address. But the sermon that is written to be delivered without the manuscript, will as of necessity have the character of an address. Note the result in the preaching of Dr. Guthrie. One can hardly cite him as an example of supreme success in memoriter preaching. But in this respect he was successful; he wrote with reference to freedom of address and with reference to committing to memory and this secured for his product the requisite oratorical quality.

The chief defect of the extemporaneous sermon is, as already suggested, that it is likely to run into generalities, to lack closeness and definiteness of thought, variety of form, compactness, brevity and precision of statement. It is at least clear, whatever else may be said about it, that the memoriter method will correct these defects.

IV

SECTION FOURTH

METHODS OF HOMILETIC ART

METHODS OF HOMILETIC ART

We are here introduced to what is technically designated as Formal Homiletics, and we shall find ourselves chiefly interested in the organic or structural rather than in the rhetorical form of the sermon. It is thus that the artistic aspects of preaching become prominent. Assuming, as we have done, that the text belongs more properly to material than to formal homiletics, let us follow the usual analysis of the organism of the Sermon.

CHAPTER I

THE INTRODUCTION

I. The Object of the Introduction

1. It is to fix attention on what is coming. "If the introduction be not pertinent," says a Welsh preacher, "the preacher does not know where he is going, and if the inferences be not pertinent, it is evident that he does not know where he has been." The same is true as regards the hearer. The introduction shows the hearer where the preacher is going. When he arrives at his landing place, which becomes a new point of departure, the hearer sees how he landed there. The introduction wins and fixes attention on this part of the journey. It is to render one's hearers at the outset "attentos" to use the classical term, in order that afterward they may the more readily become "dociles" as regards the subject and perhaps "benevolos" as regards the preacher. The text is but a general starting-point. It suggests the subject only in a general and perhaps wholly obscure manner. A transition is needed from this general starting-point to a definite, specific theme, and thence onward. By advancing from this undiscriminated, complex text-thought to the discriminated, specific theme-thought, the preacher shows his hearer the method of approach. It is a process similar to that which he followed in his own work of preparation. He thus takes the hearer along with him. Or if he gets his theme independently of the text, the introduction helps him put text and theme in manifest relation. This process holds attention. If an equivalent result could be secured at the start by dumping the theme upon

the audience, the preacher might begin at once. Sometimes this may well be done. Abruptness is sometimes of great rhetorical value. Surprise is an element of interest. But this is exceptional. In general, attention is not satisfactorily secured by asking for it at the start, or by assuming that one has it as of course. It must be won. And it is well to secure the best kind of attention and to secure it at best advantage. It is thus that the introduction adapts itself to the condition of the hearer. It has, therefore, a psychological significance and value. It approaches its object in such way as will most effectively secure for it the requisite mental and emotional point of contact with the hearer.

2. In fixing attention, the introduction also stimulates inquiry. Instead of thrusting the subject upon the hearer suddenly and without any coöperation of his own, the preacher takes him into a sort of mental and moral copartnership, leads him on step by step in such way as to secure the exercise of his faculties and to anticipate for himself measurably perhaps the subject ahead. A mental process is thus quickened. We take in objects of thought in their relations. One thing leads up to another. Each thought becomes the more significant and impressive by reason of its relation to other thoughts. We grasp the whole by following the details. "Invention" would be impossible, if we took in everything at once and in a lump. Every body is more or less inquisitive at the start. The introduction avails itself of that fact. It says; Look out for what comes next. Here is the zest of it. Skillful rhetoricians know how to stimulate this mental search. Dr. Guthrie was accustomed to work up his introductions artistically. He began abruptly and with something that is striking. He quotes some proverb, presents to the imagination some material phenomenon that has life and movement, a crawling worm or a ship entering the harbor under full sail. He touches some human experience that interests us all, like the process

of growing old. He tells a story. He approaches with a short, sharp, abrupt question. "Hast thou faith"? He thus rivets attention and in doing so stimulates the imagination and puts the hearer upon the search for his objective point. He starts at a distance from his subject, as Chrysostom used to do, and as the classical orators did and as the classical rhetoricians advised in their discussion of the Exordium. The audience becomes thus increasingly interested and alert as the preacher approaches his subject, and when they have it, he has them.

3. In fixing attention and stimulating inquiry, the introduction also secures a specific interest for and in the subject. Attention and inquiry are essential to interest. What the preacher wants is a definite mental and emotional interest in what he is at. He wants the hearer to start with him and share something of his own interest. He himself wins this interest partly by getting at the subject in a gradual way. He has not plunged into it at once. Opening up the subject as it opened itself to the preacher, the hearer will the more readily share his interest and capturing him at the start the preacher will be the more likely to hold him to the end, and thus the purpose of the sermon is the more likely to be realized, namely the reception of the truth. Apart from this purpose the introduction and the sermon itself as a whole can have no supreme significance. The ultimate purpose of the introduction is precisely that of the sermon itself. In effect the preacher says: I want to discuss an important truth, and to win your attention, quicken your activities, secure your interest and thus realize my object. I open some preliminary phase of the subject to you as clearly and as attractively as I can; I want you to see the beginning of our juorney; I want you to follow me step by step, so that you may discover the path along which we move, and by which we arrive at our objective point. I want you to test the legitimacy of my process, so that you

may apprehend it the better and perhaps value it the more. Therefore I come to you introducing my subject step by step, leading the way to it and for it into your minds and I hope your consciences and hearts. The ways of doing this are various, but the end is the same, it is to put the hearer most advantageously in possession of the truth.

Thus as having reference to the final moral purpose of the sermon the introduction has ethical significance. The object being to reach and influence men, the introduction will enable the sermon to do this the more effectively. With this ethical significance is associated an artistic significance. By contributing to the unity and symmetry of the sermon it satisfies the desire for completeness. This, of course, is a subordinate, but it is not a wholly insignificant, consideration. The sermon is an organism. The introduction is a part of it and is necessary to its symmetrical development. Or to change the figure, it is a piece of rhetorical architecture. The introduction is as necessary to its symmetry as the beginning of any artistic product. This does not mean that as a work of art it has no end beyond itself. No work of art is properly an end to itself. The end may not always be consciously present in the mind of the artist, but it will have some end, and, therefore, some ethical significance. The good in art as elsewhere is always the "good for something." One of the elements of perfection in any art product is its adaptation in all its parts to some appropriate end. It is preëminently so in any product of rhetoric art. The sermon is a rhetorical instrument. The perfection of the instrument is the completeness of its adaptation to its end. The artistic significance of the introduction, therefore, is ultimately in its contribution to the work of the sermon, and the artistic becomes allied with the ethical interest.

Primarily then, the introduction is for the sake of the sermon and of the hearer, not for the sake of the preacher. It intro-

duces the subject, not the man. The chief interest is here. Even in modern secular oratory the speaker must look out for the handling of his subject rather than for the handling of his audience by the tricks of oratory. In this pulpit oratory has led the way. Allegiance to the truth, not personal ascendency over men, is the object. Early Christian preaching laid supreme stress upon this. It knew nothing of rhetoric and oratory. It distrusted and discredited them. The discourse was artless. It was part of the service of a worshipping congregation. Neither the speaker nor the discourse needed introduction, for the worship had prepared the minds and hearts of the congregation for the discourse, which was the exposition and application of a given passage of Scripture. But advancing culture brought rhetoric and oratory into the pulpit. Hence the exordium. As the sermon displaced the homily, the exordium became a rhetorical necessity. Whenever the pulpit has returned to the homily, as in the period of the Reformation, it has dropped the introduction. Luther used the homily, and he speaks slightingly of the introduction, declaring that he does not know how to preach artistically. Nature taught him his art. But in displacing the homily, the sermon has not displaced exposition. The exposition of the text in the introduction takes the place of the homily, in so far as it was explanatory. Hence the sermon some times has both introduction and exposition. The introduction is a general approach to the subject. The exposition is a specific and explanatory approach to it by clearing up the meaning of the text and showing how the theme comes from it. Some homiletic writers still distinguish between introduction and exposition. But it is needless. Exposition is one of the best sorts of introduction. What explains the text best introduces the subject. It also prepares the hearer for it and leads him into it. Whatever the method of the introduction, its chief object is to put the hearer most successfully in possession of the sub-

ject. To announce the subject abruptly, either before or after giving the text, does not generally succeed in doing this most advantageously. Something to aid the hearer in appropriating the subject intelligently and in apprehending its significance adequately, is generally desirable. Exposition may not always be necessary, for the text may be clear and simple. But some method of approach is of value for the apprehension of the subject. Even those who announce the subject at the outset, do not get on without the introduction, for they turn back and start over again. A prompt announcement of the subject is well enough, but having done this, one would better push on. Why should one in effect say to the congregation; Brethren, I have been a little precipitate in getting this thing before you. I take it all back; let us turn about and begin anew?

But preparing the subject for the hearer involves preparing the hearer for the subject. Skill in opening the way to the subject may prove to be an effectual way of winning the hearer to that good will, attention and docile interest in the subject that is the chief aim of the sermon itself. In a word; do justice to the subject and you will be the more likely to do justice to the audience.

II. Methods of Introduction or Points of Departure

Specific methods are innumerable. For convenience let us group them about certain centers, which furnish points of departure for the work. Five of them may be named.

1. The preacher may be the center, or point of departure. What relates to the man, eliciting or concentrating interest in his personality or his experiences, may be a valuable method of approach. Secular orators avail themselves of this device and show skill in it. Pulpit oratory need not be ashamed of it. Preachers like Chrysostom, trained in the schools of

classical rhetoric, and noted for rhetorical power, have excelled in this. But modern preachers also have known the personal introduction. An interesting sermon by Saurin illustrates this.* The text is from John 14: 15, 16, "Christ's Valedictory Address to his Disciples." The preacher relates the circumstances under which he had selected his text, half apologizing for making the pulpit the vehicle of such confidential communications. It was the exhibition of extraordinary Christian patience on the part of a brother minister during a painful sickness. This sick brother had found comfort in those words of Christ. "I was struck with this discourse," says the preacher, he means in connection with the above-mentioned experience; "I immediately thought of you, my dear brethren, and I said to myself, my hearers had need be furnished with this powerful consolation, etc. Today I execute my design. Condescend to concur with me in it. Come and meditate on the last expressions which fell from the lips of the dying Saviour." The introduction centers wholly in this personal experience. Evangelistic preachers are accustomed to avail themselves of the personal introduction. Their success as evangelists gives weight to it. Mr. Spurgeon knew well how to avail himself of his hearers' interest in him, in his experiences and his accomplishments. In a sermon from John 3: 16, he begins by referring to the fact that he had been looking over the texts he had used and that he had failed to find this one among them. Then he refers to the character of his preaching and what he wishes it to be and calls them to witness that it has all been in line with this text. He refers to what an aged minister had said to him about preaching. It corresponded with what he himself had just said to them. This is the entire introduction. It might seem egotistical. Some preachers certainly would not tolerate it. But it may be effective. Most people are interested in this sort of thing. They

* Vol. VI, Sermon II.

like to hear about such matters as centre in their preacher. They are interested in persons, even if they are somewhat conceited or self-conscious persons, as Mr. Spurgeon seemed to be. But the more simple and natural and genuine a man is, the more effective the personal introduction will be. Mr. Moody was such a man, and with great effectiveness he often introduced his sermons, in a very straight forward and every way proper manner, with a reference to some observation or experience that served his purpose. In ordinary pastoral preaching the personal introduction will be relatively infrequent. One notices but few of such introductions in volumes of ordinary pastoral discourses.

2. The occasion may furnish a basis for the introduction. The occasional introduction befits the occasional sermon. It gives an appropriate festal tone to an Easter or Christmas sermon to bring the introduction into connection with the joyous nature of the occasion. Special missionary sermons frequently open with a reference to the occasion. Bishop Brooks recognized the note of timeliness in it and sometimes accentuated the significance of his missionary sermons by the use of the occasional introduction. Bishop Simpson recognized the principle of adaptation in it. Bishop Huntington's sermon, dedicatory of Appleton Chapel at Harvard, entitled "The House of Prayer," opens with a history of the building. The occasional introduction may heighten the importance of the occasion, of the sermon, of the truth, perhaps in the right way of the preacher himself, in the estimate of the congregation. The more exceptional and important the occasion, the more natural and impressive such an approach will be. Public funeral discourses may win special impressiveness by introductory reference to the solemnity of the occasion. It would be almost a mark of singularity in a sermon on some great public calamity that it should fail to open in this way. The writer recalls the notes of sympathy and of awe that rang

through the opening utterances of discourses preached on the Sunday following the assassination of President Lincoln.

Chrysostom was accustomed to catch the note of the occasion in his introductory words. In one of his "Homilies on the Statues" preached in Antioch, on the occasion of the devastation of the city by order of the Emperor Theodosius I, he opens with a reference to the circumstances of the assembly. In another he refers to the presence in the assembly of the heathen prefect of the city. Again he opens with a vivid description of the desolations of the city. Extemporaneous preachers are able to do this with facility. Ordinary sermons even may sometimes avail themselves of this type of introduction. Mr. Beecher would sometimes smuggle into his opening words some reference to what had been suggested to him as he entered the church, or by incidents connected with the congregation. The value of this type of introduction is of course, conditioned by the way in which it is done, by its naturalness, its good taste, and perhaps relative infrequency. But its pertinency and timeliness are evident at once.

3. The approach to the theme may be through the worship. German preachers affect the liturgical introduction. The Scripture lessons or the hymn before the sermon frequently furnish the point of attachment. This is the more frequent with the extemporaneous than with the manuscript preacher. Those who, in their preaching, follow the order of the Christian year, are much more likely to use the scripture lessons as a point of departure. Canon Liddon illustrates this in his Easter sermons. Trench in his advent discourse in the volume entitled "Westminster Sermons," Brooks in his discourse on "All Saints Day" and on "Trinity Sunday." It has been the custom of German preachers to make the so-called homiletic prayer a part of the introduction to the sermon, sometimes preceding and sometimes following the text. When it follows the text it the more manifestly becomes a part of the intro-

duction. Its object doubtless is to direct attention to the close connection between the sermon and the worship, and to accentuate the liturgical aspect of preaching. In this it admirably succeeds. It enhances the impressiveness of the sermon and holds it to its appropriate place in worship. It is not altogether in harmony with the habits or tastes of American preachers, or with the general character of their worship, or of their preaching or perhaps of their theory of worship and of preaching. And so much the worse, one may be permitted to say, for the worship and for the preaching and for the theory. We see here how didactic or rhetorical considerations have dominated liturgical considerations in the conduct of public worship. No one can hear or read the homiletic prayers of German preachers, like those for example of Schleiermacher, which one regrets to see are passing into desuetude, without being strongly impressed by them.

4. The topical is a frequent form of introduction. It attaches itself to the general thought of the theme and anticipates some phase of it. The text may suggest the theme only in the remotest and vaguest manner possible, and it becomes the work of the topical introduction to bring the theme into manifest relation with the text. With the larger number of topical preachers this is perhaps the point of departure. They start with the general thought of the theme. Most introductions are suggested by the theme or the text. They are fruitful sources. Bishop Brooks generally starts thus, picking up the text before he finishes the introduction, and adjusting it to the theme. Bushnell generally starts with the text rather than with the theme. A study of topics will be of value in connection with the study of the thematic or topical introduction. A very common method of starting the topical introduction is along the line of generalization or its reverse, particularization. The great master of this method in our day

was Phillips Brooks. Into this process he frequently and with good effect introduced the principle of contrast. In the sermon with the text "Unspotted from the World," the introduction begins with a series of reflections upon the changes men undergo as they advance in life. The moral change in which they become spotted by the world is one of them. Here we have a contrast between the unspotted character of Jesus, suggested by the text, and the spotted characters of men. With this as a basis we are introduced to the general subject of "Spotted Lives." In Bishop Huntington's sermon on Revivals, entitled "Permanent Realities of Religion and Times of Special Religious Interest," the introduction opens with reflections upon the influence of names in discrediting or in dignifying objects. The term Revival is an illustration of this power of words. And this is the whole introduction. It begins with what is general and passes to what is specific. It is the theme, not the text, that suggests it. Analogy, which is always involved in generalization, furnishes a good basis for the topical introduction. Saurin in his introduction to a sermon from 2 Pet. 3:8, "One Day is with the Lord as a thousand years, etc.," on the "Eternity of God"* finds the Hebrew shekinah a symbol or analogue of that aspect of the Deity suggested by the theme. The shekinah was luminous on one side and opaque on the other, so is it with the eternity of God. It is dark in itself but bright in its practical value for our lives. He was accustomed to cite analogous historical instances from the Old Testament to illustrate the thought or principle which he deduced from a New Testament text, thus making the Old Testament support the New. Stories that contain an analogy are valuable for introductory work, because they are interesting concrete illustrations of principles. What better introduction were possible for a sermon from the text "What shall it profit a man if he gain the world, etc.," whose theme will

* Vol. I, Sermon II.

naturally be the priceless worth of the human soul, than the Old Faust Legend?

There is vast range for general reflection in the introduction that starts with the theme. A habit of generalizing or of particularizing or of tracing analogies, that is, of applying a general truth to specific cases or general principles to concrete specific instances, or of transferring what is true in one realm of experience to what may be assumed to be true in another and analogous realm, is a good one for the preacher. This habit will appear in one's introductory work. Welsh preachers are fruitful in general reflective material. So were the English Puritan preachers. How often we find William Jay saying at the close of his introductions, "These reflections, my brethren, are intended to illustrate" thus and so!

5. The most common point of departure perhaps is the text, and perhaps the most valuable. The textual introduction has a wide range of possibilities. They are all of an explanatory character, dealing with the context, with the meaning of terms, with the writer, the circumstances, the time, and place of his utterance and matters of such sort. It is a valuable kind of introduction in the treatment especially of difficult texts and in the higher grade of didactic discourses. It clears away obscurities, clears up difficulties and prepares the way for intelligent apprehension of the significance of the theme. It belongs to an educative pulpit, the pulpit of men like Robertson, Bushnell, Liddon, South. It is the explanatory process that makes clear the method of securing the theme. It takes the audience along with the preacher, as if he were saying "I want to show my hand. I want to justify my homiletic ways to you, so that there be no misunderstanding between us, and no prejudgment that I have made a mistake." It is a method that not only introduces the theme successfully and so prepares the hearer for it, but it may furnish a favorable introduction for the preacher himself by indicating respect

for the intelligence of his hearers and a purpose to be instructive and helpful, and perhaps by showing skill in deducing pertinent and striking themes. The explanatory introduction has wide range. Note some of its possibilities. Word-explanation is common. Here the meaning of the central or stress-word of the text is illustrated by comparing or contrasting its use in other relations and connections. Bishop Huntington has a sermon from I Cor. 1: 26, "Ye see your calling, brethren."* The introduction explains the different uses of the word "Calling," or the different spheres in which it is applied, advancing thus to its use in the text. Narrative explanation generally introduces the historical or biographical sermon and prepares the way for the lessons or reflections that are deducible from the material as thus presented. The implicatory explanation will direct attention to what may be suggested or intimated or implied but not explicitly stated in the text. Such texts for example as Acts 4: 12, "Neither is there Salvation in any others, etc."

Circumstantial explanation will have reference to anything that heightens the significance of the text, as for example the character or condition of the one who speaks in the text or is spoken of, the time, place, occasion, object.

The comparison or contrast of cognate passages may throw introductory light upon the import of the text, as for example Matt. 18: 15, "If thy brother sin against thee, etc., compared with Matt. 5: 23, 24, "If thy brother hath ought against thee," etc. So also the passages relating to the power of the keys.

A collocation of different passages illustrating various phases of the main thought of the text may throw light upon its meaning in a preliminary way: passages for example suggesting different sorts of fear may aid in understanding the meaning of the text; "The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom." The introduction to Robertson's sermon on "The

* Christian Believing and Living, Sermon I.

Loneliness of Christ" dealing with different kinds of loneliness prepares the preacher to understand the better the loneliness of Christ. A reference to anything that is striking or peculiar in the text such as we find in Canon Mozley's introductions, starts the hearer with a new impression of it.

A reference to the impression the text has made upon some well-known person, as for example Paul's words: "So then every one of us shall give account of himself, etc.," on Daniel Webster, will very likely never be forgotten.

The use of analogy illustrates the significance of the text. Take the introduction to Dr. Guthrie's sermon on "Early Piety" from 2 Tim. 3:15, "From a child we." A man is likely to be what his childhood indicates. We see the soldier, the statesman, the poet in the boy. Nature has her prophetic intimations. So has religion. The theme is thus a generalized thought based on analogy, and the analogy is suggested by the text, not the theme.

Contrast often furnishes a striking explanatory introduction, as in Dr. Guthrie's sermon, "The Good Fight of Faith," from 2 Tim. 4:7. Contrast the spirit of Benhadad's boastful message to Ahab about his military prowess and Ahab's reply, "Let not him that girdeth on his armor boast himself as he that putteth it off," with Paul's exultation in the words of the text. Paul was obnoxious to no such reproach as was Benhadad.

The text like the theme may be generalized or particularized, and its import thus be the more clearly seen, as in Phillips Brooks' sermon on "The Purpose and Use of Comfort," from 2 Cor. 1:3, 4. There are different ways of desiring comfort. The quality of the desire will determine the worth of the comfort desired. The sort of comfort Paul desired is suggested. Then comes an appeal to the hearer, when God comforted you, did you desire to use it for others, as Paul did? If so, you have the comfort Paul had.

III. Qualities of Introduction

1. The thought-qualities of the introduction are such as relate to its proper subject matter. They are qualities of thought that are appropriate to it as containing only introductory material. Pertinency is one of these. The thought of the introduction is germane to that of the theme, or it is not introductory. It may be so remotely, but somehow it must bear upon the theme. Its starting-point may be distant, and its course circuitous, but at last it must reach and rest in the theme. Extemporaneous preachers, like Chrysostom, may allow themselves great range in the introduction, but they are sure to keep in view the objective point. That is not a proper introduction that is as pertinent to one theme as to another. The explanatory introduction is naturally most direct in its pertinence. It runs straight out from text to theme. It sets in line the whole movement of thought, and, therefore, is better prepared before than after the sermon. Pertinency of tone as well as of thought is important. The introduction is a promise. It should justify itself. It commits the preacher. It should not disappoint.

Preliminariness is another. It introduces the subject but does not anticipate it. It opens the way, prepares for the discussion, does not begin it. It does not reach over into the main body of the sermon and appropriate material that properly belongs to it. It takes up what has a preparative bearing on the subject, but does not discuss the subject itself. As being preparative, it is distinctive. Introduction, theme and discussion are not so run together that it is difficult to find the line of demarcation between them. The introduction should be known at once from its introductory quality. This is possible without formal and obtrusive division.

Reversely, what belongs to the introduction cannot properly be smuggled over into the body of the sermon. Its work is to clear the ground. The explanatory introduction is pre-

eminently the ground-clearing introduction. Robertson's sermon on "The Illusiveness of Life" is defective here. Instead of finishing in the introduction the explanation of the text and fully clearing up the matter, he carries it over and re-introduces it in the first division of the sermon, as if he were dissatisfied with his preliminary exposition. He turns upon his track. He re-enters the harbor after reaching the open sea. This is particularly objectionable in a sermon whose theme takes us so wide afield from the original historic sense of the passage as this does, and that puts us upon a wholly new line of thought. "No step backward" is a good motto for the preacher.

Coherency, or close and harmonious relation of thought in the introduction is another quality. "The thoughts of the introduction," says Claude, "must hold each other by the hand and have a mutual dependence and subordination." Progress is necessary to coherence. The introduction that moves in a straight line, in an orderly, progressive manner, will be sure to move connectedly and coherently. Bushnell's introductions, in all ways admirable, are especially notable for this straight line movement. Robertson's sermon on "Caiaphas' view of Vicarious Sacrifice" is a good example of the progressive, coherent introduction. It moves straight on, step by step, each successive step bringing us nearer the theme; all the parts support each other, and all throw light upon the coming theme. They are all tributary to the preacher's purpose to show Caiaphas' state of mind in uttering the words of the text.

2. The form qualities of the introduction are such as relate to the expression of its thought.

Concreteness is one of them. This is, indeed, a quality of substance as well as of form. It suggests the absence of abstract forms of thought and abstruse forms of expression. Such forms of expression are too remote for introductory work. In the process of discussion the preacher will find

himself in the realm of abstract thought. No instructive preacher, however illustrative his method, can wholly evade it, nor should he wish to do so. But such thought, even in the discussion, would better be expressed in concrete terms. In the introduction it is of still greater importance. No hearer is ready or willing to start in the realm of the abstract and the abstruse. He is in no condition of mind for it. What is said here must be readily apprehended. What is said may be remote and for the moment obscure in its bearings, but if in itself readily intelligible and expressed in concrete language, it will awaken the greater interest. Technical exegesis may lie behind the expository introduction, but it should never be expressed in technical language. A preacher should cultivate literary skill in interpreting his text. A skillful paraphrase, of which Dr. Bushnell was master, is an effective method of exposition. In the introduction especially a combination of what may be relatively remote in its bearings or even for the moment obscure in its meaning, with what is familiar and near at hand in its forms of expression and interpretation is desirable. We have a liking for what is familiar, but the merely familiar is the commonplace, and the commonplace does not attract or move us. It is true that we have a curious liking for what is unfamiliar and remote, provided we see, or believe or suspect, that it has some relation to what is known. But what is simply and wholly remote and unknown is so far away from us that it fails to influence us. It is when we associate what is familiar with what is relatively unfamiliar and possibly obscure in itself or especially in its bearings that it becomes interesting at once. Here lies the power of concrete language. One can not make what is so remote as to be unknown or unintelligible interesting without associating it with something that is better known, or so well known as to be familiar, just as one can not make what is so familiar as to be commonplace interesting without association with what is less well known.

A story may be in itself so familiar as to be uninterestingly common, but when introduced to illustrate a truth that is not wholly familiar or is less familiar, or for the moment remote in its bearings, it becomes interesting and impressive and instructive. The truth takes on a new meaning, and the story itself has a new meaning. This is why a pertinent, well-told story is valuable introductory material.

Simplicity is involved in concreteness, but may well be specifically considered. It is the opposite, however, not only of the abstract and the abstruse and the remote, the puzzling and obscure, but of the artificial, or perfervid or the bombastic. It is associated with what is natural and genuine and self-poised. An utterance that seems strained and artificial or over-dramatic is everywhere intolerable in preaching. But it is especially intolerable to start with a scream or with a strut. One may indeed begin at high pressure. The subject, the occasion, the preparation may sanction or even necessitate it. Phillips Brooks began with a full volume of energy and kept it up to the end. He was emotionally full of his subject at the outset and it was all natural and genuine. But after all it was largely a matter of delivery. The introduction as read does not strike us as perfervid or lacking in reflective poise, and certainly it is perfectly simple rhetorically, The normal movement of an introduction is from a simple, quiet, self-possessed and possibly somewhat reserved beginning to an increase of emotional vigor. A natural deliberation and self-poise, clear, distinct articulation and a simple, natural, perspicuous type of diction always make a favorable impression at the outset. Robertson sometimes closed his sermon in a tempest, but his introductions illustrate the power of simplicity, of reflective deliberation and self-mastery.

Propriety is associated with simplicity. It is a question not only of good literary or rhetorical, but of good ethical taste and judgment. Nothing can redeem a sermon that starts with

a rhetorical blunder, which is often nothing less than a moral blunder. If a preacher is going to blunder, if he must enter the abyss of rhetorical indecency, he would better postpone it. The sensational preacher, in his effort to be striking, is likely to enter the abyss at once. It is the initial sin. He falls from rhetorical grace, like Adam, at the start. No man in effort to win attention and to be impressive has any vocation to become an offense to those whose mental, æsthetic and moral tastes and judgments are entitled to respect.

Brevity is in part a matter of form, and economy of diction is tributary to it, as diffuseness is tributary to prolixity. Brevity is necessary in introductory work, just because it is introductory. As to limits, no rule can be given. To fix upon one-eighth of a sermon, or one-twelfth, as is sometimes done, is arbitrary. Preachers vary in this matter in their own preaching. Bushnell's introductions vary from one-eighth to one-twentieth. Guthrie's, in one of his volumes, from one-fifth to one-half. Robertson's from one-third to one-sixteenth. The preachers of former days had the long introduction. Tillotson and South and Barrow in the seventeenth century were exceptions among their comtemporaries in the matter of brevity and their influence in this regard, as in others, was reformatory. Modern preachers affect the short introduction. The evangelistic discourse naturally has a shorter introduction than the pastoral discourse. The proper mean is between an extreme of abruptness and an extreme of prolixity. The reflective quality of the introduction tends to condensation of style and thus to brevity.

No adherence to formal rules will secure good introductory work, although intelligent appropriation of rhetorical principles may be effective. Nor will imitation do it. The work is wrought largely in unconsciousness of rules or models. Still both may be of value, especially in the early period of one's ministry. The study of good modern introductory work is

of special value. But it is after all by constant and intelligent practice that one at last becomes wholly unfettered and spontaneous in his work.

CHAPTER II

THE THEME

I. Its Significance and Importance

The theme is the subject in its undeveloped form. It is the germ of the sermon. Like all germs, it is complex, containing more than a single element. It consists of a complex of thoughts out of which in his discussion the preacher brings such varieties as are adapted to the realization of his object. The theme may always be put in the form of a definite, complex statement. It contains explicitly or implicitly a proposition. Such proposition always contains the unified elements of complex thought. Unity in complexity is, therefore, the characteristic and proper test of a theme. The title of a sermon may not be its theme. It may be much more comprehensive and indefinite than the theme. A single word may be a proper title, but it is never a proper theme. We suggest the unity of the theme when we say that the sermon can have but one subject. We suggest the definiteness of the theme, when we say that it should be so conceived and stated as accurately to condition the limits of its treatment. We suggest the complexity of the theme when we say that the sermon should discuss more than a single phase of it. We suggest the completeness of the theme as a unified whole when we say that it should contain all that is to be discussed in the sermon. These may be called the logical qualities of the theme, or those qualities that are involved in its thought relations.

There are various terms used to designate the complex thought that lies at the foundation of the sermon. They all in some way suggest its unity. The most comprehensive term

is subject, *i. e.*, what lies under the whole sermon, the one foundation on which all rests. It is too broad a term. The subject is not always the exact theme. Topic is too narrow a term. It is the place where all the elements of thought in the discussion are found and from which they are derived, the storehouse where they are all gathered, and, as coming from this one source, they are all interrelated and so are legitimate to the discussion. But properly the topic is not identical with the theme, for it is generally, although not always, applied to a single phase of the theme.

Proposition is too distinctive a term. It is what is set before the preacher as the one object of his homiletic activity. But technically the proposition is a particular kind of theme, *i. e.*, one stated in logical form, and with reference to logical proof. Theme is at once definite and comprehensive. It is what is laid down as the single basis of the sermon, what the sermon is built on. All these terms involve the conceptions of unity and complexity. Various phrases also suggest this unity and complexity. The preacher will speak "about" something. His thoughts will gather around some centre, and in all their complexities, they are held together in unity. He will address the congregation "upon" or "on" some subject. That is, his discussion will rest upon a single foundation. He will speak "of" or "from" such and such a text or theme. What he says will, therefore, have unity of source. His discussion is "concerning" this or that. It is the one objective point with which his mental activity concerns itself. Centralized thought is suggested by all these forms of expression. We use them freely without reflecting upon their significance. But we use them legitimately only as we are faithful to their implications. Something is accomplished when this principle of thematic unity is duly and securely fixed. It is a bad thing to be obliged to say of a sermon what the Frenchman said of his book in the title given

it; "Sur—je ne sais quoi." Upon—I know not what. Whateley says:* "Experience shows that it is by no means uncommon for a young and uninstructed writer to content himself with such a vague and indistinct view of the point he is to aim at—that the whole train of his reasoning is in consequence affected with a corresponding perplexity, obscurity and looseness." This may be true as regards the subject as well as the object of the discussion. He criticises also,* as a common fault of such writers, "entering upon too wide a field of discussion," and imagining "that because they are treating of one thing, they are discussing one question." Cardinal Newman† on the same general subject speaks as follows; "I would go the length of recommending a preacher to place a distinct proposition before him, such as he can write down in a form of words and limit his discussion by it and to aim in all he says to bring it out and nothing else. Nothing is so fatal to the effect of a sermon as preaching on three or four subjects at once." He illustrates from the supposed case of an immature college boy who has placed before him the task of writing upon the proposition "Fortes fortuna adjuvat," and detaches the word "fortuna" and makes that the basis of his thesis. "Fortuna is not a subject," he says. "It would have been very cruel to tell a boy to write on fortune; it would have been like asking him his opinion of things in general. Fortune is good or bad, capricious, unexpected, ten thousand things all at once, and one of them as much as another. Ten thousand things may be said of it; give me one of them and I will write upon it. I can not write on more than one," etc., etc. "Fortes fortuna adjuvat" is a proposition; it states a certain general principle, and this is just what an ordinary boy would be sure to miss. This is doubtless instruction for the primary grade. But observation proves that it is pertinent to those who are supposed

* Elements of Rhetoric, page 54.
† Lectures on University Subjects, page 100 ff.

to have advanced far beyond it. To get a proper theme, then, a definite, complex, unified thought, capable, although it need not always be done, of being put into the form of a proposition, —this is an important step in sermon preparation. A process of analysis may be necessary in order to secure this. One must find out the elements of thought that lie in the text, must detach these elements, or such of them as one may wish to select for use and then gather them by recombination into some central, all embracing, unified thought. The product of such analysis and synthesis should be a proper theme. If one gets his theme independently of the text, something of the same process may be necessary. An analysis and synthesis of both text and subject are combined. The theme will then take shape and color from the elements of both.

The importance of the theme can not be measured by the space it occupies in the organism of the sermon. Like the heart or brain in the human body, it is to be measured, not by its size, but by its function. Prof. Phelps in his "Theory of Preaching," devotes eighty-two pages to the discussion of it; sixty pages to the plan and not quite thirty pages to the development of the sermon. That is, the theme receives more than one-third the amount of attention that is given to the plan and almost three times as much attention as that given to the development. The entire discussion is over-elaborate perhaps. There may also be a disproportion in it. But at any rate it suggests the centrality, the vitality, and the supreme significance of the theme.

II. Its Formulation

This question receives but little attention in the preaching of our day, and seemingly it is regarded as unimportant. Reaction against the formal methods of a former period and devotion to the offhand, businesslike method with which we are

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all so familiar largely accounts for this. But as against all this I insist upon its importance. From what has been said it may be inferred that the theme should at any rate take very definite form in the mind of the preacher. With respect to this question the following suggestions are pertinent.

1. The theme should have a prominence proportionate to its importance. A distinctness of statement or a definiteness of suggestion or intimation adequate to a clear apprehension on the part of the hearer is the chief demand. One may put his audience in possession of his theme in a great variety of ways. It may be done by formal announcement or by facile intimation. It may be done propositionally or rhetorically, in exceptional cases, following the inductive method, it may be done at the end of the sermon, or following the deductive method, which is the more common homiletic method, at the beginning. Facility and variety in the method of projecting the theme are desirable. It is well to awaken the curiosity and inquisitiveness of the hearer in one's approach to his theme. But however it may be done it should be done with sufficient definiteness for clear apprehension, and however one may reach his theme the hearer should know that he has reached it, and should know what it is. If a preacher doesn't propose to tell his hearers what he is going to talk about, if he puts upon them the task of finding out for themselves, let them so understand it. But if he attempts to get his theme before them, it is a proper thing for him to succeed in doing it. In deliberative and judicial oratory the exact question in discussion is of some importance. Respect for himself as a public speaker, for his profession, for his audience, for his case or question, respect for his success in carrying his case or question, impels the secular orator to exactness of conception and of statement. Is Christian oratory less important? Respect for the truth and regard for effec-

tiveness accentuate the demand upon the preacher. When he undertakes to get his subject before his audience, he should succeed, so that there be no misapprehension about it.

Especially necessary is this whenever there is liability to misapprehension by reason of defect in the hearer. Immaturity, ignorance, dullness, inattention and indifference are prolific of misunderstanding, and hostility may readily pervert the preacher's meaning. It is singular with what facility even intelligent hearers misinterpret the preacher. There are but few preachers that have not had startling experiences in this matter. Definite formal statement is desirable whenever one anticipates such liability to mistake. For the sake even of a small section of the congregation one is bound to clearness of statement. One may respect his audience without over-taxing it. It is idle to imagine that one may successfully throw the responsibility upon the congregation, or that they will resent the preacher's solicitude for clarity of statement. The preacher is responsible that the hearer know just what he is going to talk about.

Difficult subjects demand careful statement, subjects that are in themselves weighty and demand careful discussion, or that have difficult texts that require careful explanation, or that are complicated or puzzling, or that for whatever reason require close attention. Definite statement may even be conducive to rhetorical effectiveness.

It is generally assumed that the textual sermon may treat the theme with great freedom. But if the content of the text is exceptionally complex, it may well be gathered into a theme for the sake of unity. Robertson's themes are always included in his topics. The topics cover the theme well enough, but not infrequently it would be better if the theme were detached from the divisions and definitely stated. Then at a glance theme and divisions would vindicate each other.

It is also commonly taken for granted that the expository sermon needs no theme. But if the text content is large and complex it were better if it were subsumed under one central and inclusive thought. It is the statement of the theme that differentiates the expository sermon from the homily. The homily needs no theme, for it does not discuss one subject. But it no longer satisfies the needs of the pulpit. The rambling character of expository preaching, which is one of the chief objections against it, would be obviated by the formulation of a theme that contains its entire material, *e. g.*, James 1 : 19—21, 26. Theme: "The sins of the tongue." 1. Source, 2. Result, 3. Corrective.

A definite conception and statement of the theme is of value first, in keeping the sermon in good form. It is the more likely thus to be kept in the form of an address as distinguished from that of an essay. At any rate, it imposes an additional motive upon the preacher to keep within limits in his discussion. One feels the pressure of necessity to do what one is advertised to do. Secondly, it is of value in enabling the hearer the better to retain the sermon. It puts him in definite possession of the subject at the outset. All embarrassment of uncertainity is thus avoided. Holding it at the start, one keeps it to the end and tests the sermon by it at every step. This may well offset all minor objections against the formality of a definite statement. It should certainly discredit all caprice and indifference about it. It should be no weighty objection to the homiletic free lance that preachers of a former period were careful to state their themes. Homiletic standards have changed and the abandonment of doctrinal preaching doubtless lessens somewhat, the demand for formal statement. But a rhetorical or literary taste that should discredit care in getting important subjects somehow before the audience would be shallow and meretricious. Rhetorical facility and effectiveness are not dependent upon a slack grip of one's

subject. The educative preacher will treat his theme with respect.

2. But definiteness of apprehension is not unconditionally dependent upon formal statement. In unelaborate discourse, elaborate statement is never necessary. Facile intimation may be more appropriate. Formal statement would seem gratuitous and perhaps pretentious.

The Text may adequately suggest the theme. If it is short, simple, clear and presents at once a definite complex thought, it is all that is needed. It would be more than needless to formulate a theme from the words, "Christ who is our life," or the words "One thing is needful." An offhand suggestion in rhetorical form might be worth while, but even this is needless.

Dr. Guthrie generally lets the text suggest his theme, *e. g.*, Hosea 7: 9, "Gray hairs are here and there upon him, etc." Title; "Neglected warnings." This would be a good suggestion of the theme. But the preacher assumes that the text has done the work, and there is no stated theme at all. This is a case where the "final theme" might well be substituted for the "casual theme" if one were to suggest a theme at all, *i. e.*, the object rather than the subject of the sermon might be stated, *e. g.*, "It is my purpose to remind you of the danger of unheeded admonition." But there is no need even of this. The text is sufficient. Ps. 130: 4, "There is forgiveness with Thee that thou mayest be feared." The title would be a good theme. "Forgiveness and fear." But Dr. Guthrie does not avail himself of it. He points out in the introduction the apparent incongruity between forgiveness and fear and attaches himself at once to the text with the words; "In opening up the subject of the text, I observe," etc. Is. 59: 1, "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened," etc. The introduction takes up the thought of change. But God does not change, and it concludes thus: "Therefore, speaking of Him, the prophet says 'Behold' " etc.

The text as thus repeated together with the introduction furnishes a sufficient basis for the discussion. The title would make a good statement of the theme. But Dr. Guthrie is too offhand to utilize it. His texts, however, are generally simple and clear and readily suggest his subjects.

The introduction may adequately do the work of announcement, especially if it be the expository introduction. Canon Liddon generally makes his introductions do this work. His texts are simple, his subjects come obviously from them, and his introductions are explanatory and succeed in getting the thought discussed clearly before his hearers. As we have seen, Dr. Guthrie relies upon his introductions as well as texts in this interest. So does Bishop Brooks. Here is the value of good introductory work.

The occasion may furnish the theme. A funeral or a memorial discourse speaks for itself. Such discourses have always been characterized by homiletic freedom. Evangelistic discourses are less dependent than pastoral discourses upon the formulated theme. Direct impression rather than instruction is the object. It is when we wish to make an impression indirectly, *i. e.*, through mental and moral judgments, that we are careful to formulate the theme. Here we deal with the subject in its related thought-elements. In the evangelistic sermon, where the text is used for direct application rather than for instruction a statement of the object may be better than a statement of the subject.

III. Methods of Statement

All methods are included in the comprehensive division of rhetorical and logical or propositional. We will consider them in order.

1. The rhetorical method of statement is non-propositional It contains no definite expression of judgment. It is adapted to such discussion as seeks impression by rhetorical methods

as distinguished from impression by argument, dialectic or logic. Hence called the rhetorical method, *e. g.*, Heb. 3:19. "So we see that they were not able to enter in (to rest) because of unbelief." The unrest of an unbelieving Heart. Matt. 16:26. "For what shall a man be profited," etc. The priceless worth of the Higher Life. Hosea 7:9. "Gray hairs are here and there upon him," etc. Neglected warnings. Is. 59:1. "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened," etc. The Undecaying Power and Grace of God. Acts 10:19. "While Peter thought on the Vision," etc. Visions and Tasks. John 12:36. "Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, whither goest thou," etc. The Withheld Completions of Life.

2. The logical method is propositional. It is a formal expression of judgment and calls for proof. It is the method that is adapted to argumentative processes. The discussion is responsible to bring out the relations of thought contained in the proposition. Hence called logical: *e. g.*, "Unbelief is a source of unrest. I am here to remind you that there is danger in unheeded admonition. There are no limits to the Power and Grace of God. Vision realizes its purpose only as translated into Task. Human life never realizes its full fruition." These are formal expressions of judgment. They call for some sort of evidence. It may be argumentative or illustrative, according to the nature and object of the discussion. The simpler subjects are naturally illustrated. But no theme stated propositionally should fail of support by some sort of evidence. The thought-relation between subject and predicate must be maintained, *e. g.*, the thought-relation in the above-mentioned theme between unbelief and unrest of soul. The possible range in the discussion of subjects thus stated is very great and the possible limitations of the subject varied, *e. g.*, the reasons why unrest follows unbelief, the forms of such unrest, the kind of unbelief, whether mental or moral, that produce unrest. As to the

method of discussion, one may argue from the constitution of the human soul or may illustrate from example and experience. The introduction will lead up to the particular theme that is chosen and the specific statement of the theme will fix the general direction in which the sermon will move.

3. The two forms may be stated affirmatively, negatively or interrogatively. The title to one of Dr. Bushnell's sermons, "Christ waiting to find room," illustrates the affirmative rhetorical method. His statement of the theme; "The very impressive fact that Jesus could not find room in the world, and has never yet been able to find it" illustrates the logical negative method. "No room for Christ" illustrates the rhetorical negative method, and "Jesus waited and is waiting still to find room" the logical affirmative method. "No room for Christ?" and "Why is it that Christ found no room and has never yet found room?" may illustrate the interrogative method. "The unrest of the unbelieving heart." "Unbelief is the mother of unrest." "The impossibility of rest for the unbelieving heart." "There is no rest for the unbelieving heart." "Why unbelief means unrest." "What rest for the unbelieving heart?" These statements still further illustrate the affirmative, negative and interrogative forms of the two methods. Each, it is evident, will, if properly developed, result in a distinctive discussion. The statement will condition the plan and development. The affirmative is the more common form. It is general and comprehensive in character. The other forms are more specific. The negative form calls for a negative discussion corresponding. The interrogative form is of value in discussing difficult or delicate or offensive themes. It may encourage a certain delicacy of treatment, and may result in a more persuasive type of preaching. It may also condition a more definite appeal. If these questions of form

were more carefully considered, it is possible that preaching would be more varied, more attractive and more persuasive.

4. It is evident at once that the two forms are interchangeable. The possibility of such interchange is the mark of a proper theme. The rhetorical form always contains a potential proposition.

5. The choice of form will depend largely upon the character and object of the sermon. But the quality of the text, the occasion, the audience, or the tendencies or capacities of the preacher are also considerations to be taken into account.

6. The points of relative value in the two forms may well be considered.

The rhetorical form presents the theme in the most comprehensive and indefinite manner; the logical form more limitedly and definitely. If one wishes range he will choose the former, if close limits, the latter.

The rhetorical form admits of greater variety of treatment. Range conditions variety. The only assignable limit is the nature and object of the sermon. A great variety of methods of treatment or of topics is, therefore, available. Take once more Heb. 3:19. Note the possible methods, *e. g.*, discussion by reflection or deduction of inferential topics, by illustration and example, by explication or analysis, by practical application, by the interrogative process. The logical form, because it invites a more definite formal discussion and hence limits the preacher, will not so readily yield itself to a wide range and variety in treatment. By limiting freedom, however, it may secure a more definite, concentrated and vigorous discussion, and so secure a more decisive result. Some themes demand closer treatment than others and some sermons demand more definite and specific aim than others.

The rhetorical form is adapted to the simpler class of sermons, the logical to the weightier class. No preacher of good taste or judgment would think of putting into propositional form a theme from the text, "One thing is needful." The text, although in the form of a proposition is so simple that it calls for discussion by way of reflection rather than argumentative elaboration. The rhetorical form is the only one admissible.

The rhetorical form, it follows in this connection, is adapted to what is called suggestive preaching, *i.e.*, preaching in which the material is used indirectly by some process of reflection or illustration, or practical application, rather than by an elaborate process of discussion. Perhaps most Biblical texts are best adapted to this form. Revelation does not come in propositional form. The Bible is peculiarly adapted to the work of teaching by suggestion. The larger number of preachers in our day, who are known as suggestive preachers, choose the rhetorical form. On the other hand the logical form readily lends itself to the doctrinal or elaborately and closely didactic type of preaching, and especially to such subjects as deal with theological difficulties that must be cleaned up.

It follows that the rhetorical form is adapted to sermons that seek popular impression. This because they deal concretely and suggestively with the truth. But much depends upon the preacher. The preaching of Dr. Bushnell illustrates the possibility of discussing propositional themes in popular form. His themes are generally thrown into the logical form, and yet the discussion is highly attractive. This because he was a rhetorician as well as logician. Most preaching of this sort, however, as illustrated by the preaching of New England, has been relatively deficient in popular quality. Even the preaching of Bushnell would be re-

garded in our day as too solid and elaborate for the average audience.

The rhetorical form in unskillful hands may involve itself in diffusiveness and ineffectiveness of treatment. This because it is wide-ranging. Reversely, the logical form by limiting surface or lateral range may force the preacher inward and downward and so result in a more incisive and intensive and effective treatment. He who is forced to dig within a limited range for what he gets is likely to work the more intensely.

There is a large number of passages that readily suggest the exact rhetorical form demanded. Some of them are fragments or incomplete grammatical sentences: *e. g.*, Luke 10:42, The one thing needful. 2 Pet. 1:11, The abundant entrance. John 20: 11, 12, Angels of hope at the tomb of the risen Lord. I John 3: 2, The hidden Glory of the Sons of God. Eph. 3: 8, Small saints or spiritual dwarfage. Acts 18: 15, The courage of Thankfulness. 2 Tim. 4: 7, The Good Fight. From such texts one would hardly think of developing an elaborate propositional discussion.

The two forms are often combined and with good effect. Dr. Bushnell often does this. It is in fact one of his homiletic peculiarities, *e. g.*, Job 32: 8. "But there is a spirit in man, etc." Theme; "My subject is 'The spirit in man' or what is the same, the fact that we are, as being spirit permeable and inspirable by the Almighty." John 6: 30, "Ye also have seen me and believe not." Theme. "I propose a discourse on the reason of faith, or to show how it is that we, as intelligent beings, are called to believe and how, as sinners, we can in the nature of things be saved only by faith." This combines a statement of the general subject with the specific line of discussion and the specific object of the sermon. It suggests indefinitely the general region in which we are to travel and then the particular road we

are to take in the journey and it suggests also the object of the journey. It suggests the generic thought-material and the particular use to be made of it, in the discussion. It is as if Dr. Bushnell would say in the sermon on the reason of faith; as regards the general thought, the general subject matter of my discourse, I rely upon your intellectual interest as I attempt to clear it up and justify my theme. But I assume that you have a moral interest in it as well. I wish, therefore, to discuss it in such way as will leave not only a mental impression of the reasonableness of the subject, but I wish to do it in such way as will leave as strong a moral impression as possible. I want to prove, with reference to practical interests that we as rational beings are called upon to believe and that as sinners we must believe. Here the rhetorial form yields what is known as the "causal theme," *i. e.*, the theme as containing the general subject, which is the cause or the source of the sermon and which furnishes its material of thought, while the logical form yields what is known as the "final theme," *i.e.*, the theme as conditioned and shaped in its statement with reference to the final purpose of the sermon.

IV. Qualities of Form

The literary form in which the theme is expressed is not without importance. Its close connection with its thought-qualities or logical-qualities renders it the more important. There are four of such form-qualities that should be considered.

1. Precision of form. Many otherwise good preachers are careless with respect to exactness of statement. An exactness of statement corresponding to exactness of conception is what is demanded. A statement may be in exact English and yet may be inexact as related to the theme and the discussion. Canon Mosley sometimes fails here: *e. g.*, Matt. 5: 20. "Ex-

cept your righteousness exceed, etc." A sermon on the Pharisees. Theme; "With these introductory remarks I come to the subject of the text, *viz.*, the Gospel language relating to the Pharisees." This theme is not accurately suggestive of the text or of the discussion. It is too large for the text. It would not be an appropriate subject for a sermon anyway. It would be unprofitable for practical purposes. Who would venture to devote an entire sermon to an exposition of Scripture passages relating to the Pharisees? Canon Mozley certainly does not venture to do it. This is not the subject discussed. It is rather some characteristics of the Pharisees. Some of these characteristics are suggested by some of the declarations of the Gospels, but the Gospel language about them is a very unimportant factor in the discussion. The sermon is in fact a skillful analysis of Pharisaic character. The terms of the theme, therefore, do not accurately state the character of the discussion and a certain confusion is introduced at just that point when clearness and exactness are demanded. The statement may be grammatically exact, but it is not logically exact. It is not an exactness of statement that corresponds to exactness of conception. If a preacher aims, as every effective preacher will, to get hold of one clear, definite idea, or to let it get hold of him, and to set it forth with all possible clearness and distinctness, his theme is pretty likely to be definite and the statement of it will have an exactness corresponding to this definiteness. Division of the elements of the theme in connection with its statement promotes definiteness and precision, for the topics must be clearly justified by the theme at the outset, *e. g.*, a sermon by Prof. George Shepard from John 1:4,* "And the word was made flesh," etc. Theme: "I shall touch in a rapid, discursive way some of the items that

* Sermon XX.

go to make up the completeness, the infinity of the glory of Christ — greatness — mystery — condescension — love — wealth — power — achievement." These "items" are topics of the theme, and their statement promotes exactness. A combination of the rhetorical and logical forms also promotes exactness, as illustrated by Dr. Bushnell's preaching.

2. Simplicity or unelaborateness of form, *i. e.*, grammatical simplicity. The rhetorical form is likely to be the simpler, although not as of course. The logical form, however, as being propositional, demanding exceptional exactness and calling for thorough discussion, is likely to be fuller and more elaborate. But here too simplicity of statement is desirable. Non-technical concrete language is simple, and such may well be the language of the theme. Thus we find it in preachers like Bishop Brooks, *e. g.*, the sermon whose title is "The man with one talent." Theme; "Let us speak today about the one talented men, the men who are crushed and enfeebled by a sense of their own insignificance." This is not a concise statement, nor rhetorically climacteric (*"crushed* and *enfeebled"!*), but it is like most of the preacher's statements, straightforward and business-like, although they are sometimes needlessly diffuse and complex and once in a while careless.

3. Compactness is a quality that promotes strength and possibly vividness of impression. Short themes, like short texts, are striking. Long, elaborate statements may be complicated and obscure and so unimpressive, *e. g.*, Bishop Huntington's sermon from Rev. 2: 17.* Theme; "Let us divide and state in their order the principal points of Christian truth, which seem to start for our practical instruction and encouragement out of this mystical promise of the Apocalypse." This is needlessly diffuse. Why not some

* Christian Believing and Living, Sermon XIV page 260.

concise suggestion like this: Let us consider some of the lessons from the mystical stone. The best preachers often fail here. Even that master of compact style, Prof. George Shepard: *e. g.*, Luke 11:41. "Give alms, etc."* A missionary sermon on giving. Title; "The Moral Discipline of Giving." Theme; "I come to this, then as the main topic of my discussion; giving of what God may have given us, as a means of disciplining, purifying, elevating the character. And I might speak of this discipline as both retrospective and prospective." This is too diffuse and elaborate. The title is a good theme.

4. Gracefulness is a rhetorical quality in the statement of the theme, little cultivated by American preachers, but in which German preachers are proficient. Kreummacher's theme, "The Love that is above mother Love," will illustrate this. Preachers of the Latin Church, *e. g.*, Leo the Great, were accustomed to give their themes rhythmically. Claus Harms, the popular German preacher, followed this custom and the German, like the Latin assonance, is well fitted for graceful impression. English preachers, like William Jay and earlier the Puritan preachers, cultivated this. We find a trace of it in Mr. Spurgeon, *e. g.*, a sermon heard by the writer from Rev. 1:18, "I am he that liveth and was dead, etc." Theme; "The Power of the Keys and the Key of the Power." Figurative texts or texts used figuratively are conducive to felicity of statement, *e. g.*, John 19:41, "Now, in the place where he was crucified there was a garden and in the garden a tomb, etc." Theme; "The Grave in the Garden of Life." Such statements of course will call for a corresponding felicity of style in the treatment of the theme. Sensational preachers overwork felicity and it becomes grotesque, *e. g.*, the late Dr. Talmadge, and Rowland Hill of Surrey Chapel, London. But it is as bad to err

* Sermon XI, page 122.

on the side of the prosiac dullness and common place as on that of extravagance and grotesqueness. A man of literary taste and rhetorical skill will cultivate felicity of statement. It is an important element in suggestive preaching.

CHAPTER III.

THE OUTLINE

I. Its Significance

The outline is the expansion of the theme into its different centres or groups of thought. It is the process by which the theme as the germ of the sermon begins to grow and develop. As a result of this process every part should find its proper place in the organism of the sermon, as in the development of any organism every part should find the place that belongs to it. Here we have the beginning of structural form. Without it, we have only a germ or a structureless mass of homiletic protoplasm. Changing the figure, and, after the manner of the classical rhetoricians, using a military term, the division is a part of the disposition (dispositio), *i. e.*, it belongs to the scheme or distribution of parts. It suggests an arrangement of troops in line of battle. The success of the battle is conditioned largely by the skillful arrangement of forces, and the success of preaching is conditioned in part by the skillful arrangement of the elements of the subject. It is like the skill of a general in handling his troops, each man being put where he belongs and doing his duty at his post. We use a variety of terms to designate the partition or division of the elements of the theme. It is the "plan" of the sermon, *i. e.*, the arrangement of the different groups or centres of thought contained in the theme, in accordance with some scheme of arrangement so as to shape the discussion into a complete whole, as we shape a building into architectural

unity in accordance with an architectural plan. We speak, therefore, of the architecture of the sermon.

It is the "scheme," or varying the thought to make the notion of unity and order the more emphatic, it is the "skeleton," suggesting an imitation of nature's most symmetrical work. The divisions are the "heads" of the sermon. They suggest the prominence with which the groups of thought should stand out to the hearer's apprehension in the line of development. They are those chief centres of thought, in the content of the sermon, that contain all subordinate elements and, as it were, stand above them as the head above the body.

With like emphasis we call them "points" using nature's definitiveness of outline to suggest the definiteness of outline that should mark the progress of the development of the sermon or that should characterize its structural form, *i. e.*, they are prominent features of the subject that jut out into view like salient points to mark the line or course of thought. We might use Coleridge's term and call them "landing places." The discussion is a stream of thought. The divisions or "heads" are islands in the stream. The preacher launches out from his point of departure and heads toward these different landing-places in his course, passing from one to another, till the last is reached and the course is ended. They are "pauses," they are "rests" that mark progress. They are "mile-stones" that mark the stages of the journey. All these terms in their essential significance suggest the nature of the work and by their variety perhaps suggest its importance. Orderly method in the development of the sermon is the prevailing suggestion, a method that conforms to the relations of thought and to the laws of the soul's action. With this is included the notions of unity and progress in the discussion. These qualities are necessary not only to clearness but are also conducive

even to force and gracefulness as elements of rhetorical effectiveness in the discussion.

II. The Methods of Outline

There are two chief methods of distributing the elements of the text or the theme, which have already been brought to our attention. They are the textual and the topical, or the analytic and the synthetic, as they are sometimes called. The former analyzes the elements of the text and distributes them as textual topics in the divisions of the sermon. The latter secures a theme from the text by a synthesis of its elements, or by a synthesis of thoughts suggested by it, but which may have a relative independence of it and then distributes these elements under certain topics or rubrics of thought. Thus the textual method deals directly with the elements of the text and distributes them and them only as topics throughout the sermon. The topical method deals indirectly with the text and directly with the theme, distributing its elements as topics in relative independence of the text. The two methods result in two very different types of preaching. Success in both methods presupposes training in them.

Let us examine them.

1. With respect to the textual method, a few general suggestions relative to its use may be of value.

The character of the text is the first regulative consideration. A passage that is complex in its content of thought lends itself readily to the textual method. The passage that is short and simple and closely unified in its content of thought is better adapted to topical treatment.

The textual method is adapted to the simpler subjects and to the relatively uninstructed and uncultured class of hearers. It is a simple method of preaching, dealing, as it does, in an unartistic way, with the explanation and

applications of the elements of the text and requires chiefly facility in popular exposition and practical suggestion. The topical method is adapted to the weightier subjects, to the more elaborate discussion and to the more cultivated audience. It exacts upon the artistic skill of the preacher.

It is a method that is easily mastered. It is, therefore, of value to a hard-worked preacher whose productive powers are heavily taxed. The topical sermon reacts more severely upon the inventive powers and success in it is the more difficult.

It is an important consideration that it is the Biblical method distinctively. The better modern knowledge of the Bible invites the preacher to cultivate it. The topical method admits, even demands, wider range, and it may be a possible range widely remote from the Biblical field of thought. In many cases it proves itself to be a very helpful and suggestive method of practical preaching. The thought basis lies immediately before the preacher and stimulates his inventive powers. The topical sermon may be the more educative type of sermon, but, as presupposing the more weighty and difficult class of subjects, more heavily taxes the preacher's inventive power.

The textual method may be easily overworked, in deducing thought from the text by remote processes of suggestion. The preacher may easily impose upon the text, or smuggle into it, what does not belong to it. There may be a temptation to over-press every clause of the text and as a result the whole sermon may suggest the strain of unreality. In the topical sermon the chief point of pressure upon the text where it may be subjected to an overstrain, is in deducing the theme from it.

A lack of unity of thought is one of the possible, and easily possible, infelicities of the textual method. But the formulation of a theme that will cover the thought content of

the text will obviate this. The topical-textual or synthetic-analytic is the only satisfactory textual method.

The textual division may attach itself to the stress-words or to the stress-thought of the passage. Passages whose chief words are pregnant with meaning and are so related as to secure unity of thought may become the basis of a successful verbal development, *e. g.*, Romans 8:28, "And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good." Theme: What we may know of the government of God. 1. That God is at "work" in it. 2. That His activities work coöperatively, "together." 3. That they work teleologically, work "for" something. 4. That they work beneficently, or towards the "good." 5. That they work conditionally toward this beneficence, "to them that love God." Micah 6:8, "And what does the Lord require of thee, but to do justly," etc. Theme: The Summary of divine requisitions, 1. Justice. 2. Philanthrophy. 3. Piety. James 5:16 (b), "The supplication of a *righteous man availeth much* in its *working*. Theme; Prevailing Prayer. 1. The type of prayer—the cry of human want. 2. Its ethical quality. 3. The sphere of its prevailing efficacy. It "avails" to accomplish objective results. 4. Its measure and variety—"avails much." 5. The subjective conditions, because it energizes within. The objection against this method of treating texts is that it is likely to degenerate into allegory, artificiality and lack of unity. The textual division that attaches itself to the stress-thoughts of the passage may be identical with and not differentiable from the topical method, *e. g.*, Rev. 3:20, "Behold I stand at the door and knock," etc., may be treated according to the supplemental textual method, in which, as not infrequently in Robertson's preaching, topics from without may be combined with topics furnished by the text. 2 Cor. 5:14, "For the love of Christ constraineth us," may be treated according to the

expansive textual method, *i. e.*, by educing the elements of thought involved in the constraint of Christ's love. 1. A rational constraint. 2. A moral constraint, etc. John 6: 68, "Simon Peter answered him: To whom shall we go," etc., may be treated according to what may be called the implicative textual method, *i. e.*, by educing the implications of the text. 1. We must in religion go somewhere, must get beyond ourselves. 2. Must appeal to a living personal being. 3. It is to Christ or no one, etc. A passage like Acts 16: 30, "What must I do to be saved," may be treated according to the grammatical textual method, following the subject, predicate and object. 1. The personal search. 2. The practical method. 3. The object sought.

2. As to the topical method, there are two classes that should be examined. One deals immediately and directly with the main thought of the theme and discusses it with reference to the work of instruction. The other deals indirectly with the thought of the theme and uses it in the way of application and with reference to practical interests. One lays stress upon the subject and the other upon the object of the sermon. The former, as being expository of the thought of the theme and aiming at instruction, may be called the didactic topical method, and the latter, as deducing inferences from the theme for practical use, may be called the applicatory topical method.

(1) In the didactic plan or division of the theme, the immediate object is to bring out the different groups of thought that lie in the theme with reference to the work of teaching. The subject is the important matter and must be discussed on the basis of its importance as a subject. The application may be made in connection with the discussion, or subsequently in the conclusion. But whenever and wherever made, it is based upon the discussion, and is in a way subordinate to it. The immediate thing is to get the

elements of the subject before the hearer in such way as to increase or clarify or rectify his knowledge of it. Most topical sermons of the weightier sort belong to this class. Such was the old New England topical sermon. Its object was indoctrination, and it was shaped with reference to this end. Didactic methods vary. Those current in our day differ from those of a previous period. But whatever the method, the aim of the didactic sermon is the same. It is edification by increase, or clarification or correction of knowledge. So long as due attention is given to the moral and religious aim of the sermon, the didactic method of handling its material is very important. This is pastoral preaching by preëminence.

(2) In the applicatory method, the material of the subject is handled in a practical and suggestive manner, and with reference primarily to moral and religious incentive. It takes up at once the bearings of the subject upon practical interests. It may be in the form of inferences that have a bearing upon men's beliefs, for truth may have a practical bearing upon one's opinions, or it may have a practical bearing upon the formation of their characters or upon their general conduct or upon some specific and immediate line of action. It generally deals with inferential thoughts of a suggestive, quickening character, *e. g.*, Matt. 20:28, "Even as the Son of man came, not to be ministered unto," etc. The subject suggested here is familiar and does not call for elaborate didactic treatment. It is better to apply the subject by deducing inferential thoughts from it. 1. The subject suggests the way in which Christ established his ascendency over men. 2. It suggests our supreme want. 3. It suggests our supreme life task. This method need not fail in discussion. The applications themselves are discussed. But it is discussion by the process of indirection. It may rescue the sermon from unfruitful discussion or un-

profitable commonplace. Themes that demand thorough explication and discussion call for the didactic method. The simpler, the more commonplace, the more practical, the more difficult perhaps, and I will add the more offensive, subjects may best be handled by the applicatory method. If the preacher seeks increase of moral and spiritual impulse he will naturally choose this method. No one would wish an elaborate, didactic discussion of Revelation 3:20. A passage like Gal. 1:8, "But though we or an angel from heaven," etc., would be difficult to treat by the direct didactic method. It is offensive and should be treated by indirection, *e. g.*, Theme: Paul's estimate of his Gospel. 1. It suggests the value of positive beliefs. 2. The value of hedging belief with strong conviction. 3. The value of correct beliefs. 4. Justification of indignation against the teaching and teachers of error. These topics are inferential and applicatory and on the whole, taken together may not be offensive.

An extreme of the didactic method is found in the scholastic type of preaching. An extreme of the applicatory may be found in some classes of the evangelistic type of preaching. In the one case we have an excess of discussion without sufficient practical use. In the other we have an excess of application without the support of discussion. It is better on the whole perhaps not to divorce them. The truth, when necessary, should be adequately interpreted to the mind, and at the same time the practical needs of the hearer should not be forgotten. Justice to the subject and at the same time justice to the object should be the aim. And yet it may be necessary sometimes to separate them. A strictly doctrinal and strictly evangelistic sermon are sometimes necessary. In ordinary pastoral preaching, however, a hard and fast line between discussion and application is hardly necessary or desirable.

III. The Necessity of Outline

No elaboration of this topic is called for. There are but two suggestions.

1. There can be no sermon without outline, more or less distinct. The textual sermon has, of course, the divisions of the text. But how about the topical sermon? Must it have divisions as well? I repeat no sermon is possible without division. Why? Let us see. One has a theme. No theme, no sermon, but homily. It may be hidden or at the surface, implicit or explicit, held in solution or emergent in form. But it is there, and it is one. And it contains groups of subordinate thought. They are all wrapped up there in the theme. The theme is capable of formulation in some sort of proposition or affirmation or statement, and about it not one thing but many complex things may be said. Now, what will one do? Use or apply the subject, perhaps? Very well. This involves partition or division into different aspects or phases of what is to be used or applied. One does not use or apply the subject by saying one thing over and over again in the same way in which it has been said in the theme. There is no development of the subject in this. There is no bringing out of the complexities of thought that are hidden in the theme. The theme is applied only when different applicatory aspects of it are brought out. But perhaps one will discuss rather than apply the subject? It may be done variously. No matter how. One will *dis-cuss* it, *i. e.*, etymologically one will shake it asunder into its elements, one will break up that complex mass, the theme, into its constituent elements. To discuss a subject is to disintegrate it, and to examine, reflect upon and use the parts of which it is composed. Otherwise one does not discuss it, he fools with it. Now, here is division. It is a manifest necessity. The only question is; what sort of division? Or the further question: How definite and manifest

shall it be? Some sort there must be. One must know those hidden—those possible groups of thought that lie there, else one does not know his subject. What can one do with it without knowing something about it? To know and handle the theme, then involves division. Now, it needs no argument, or should need none, that in general this division process should in some way be made apparent, at least sufficiently so for the accomplishment of one's purpose. The preacher *must* have some scheme of thought in mind, and the audience *ought* to have the avail of it, if the preacher will reasonably expect to do anything for them.

2. The character of the sermon, as determined by its subject and object, conditions the kind of divisions, as well as their number and their definiteness of outline. Let us look then at the two types of sermon above referred to as related to this question.

As regards the didactic sermon, the demand is, of course, that it be instructive. The audience, therefore, should be able to take in and take away the whole sermon, to take it not simply as a whole but in its parts and relations and thus in fact be the better able to retain it as a whole. The success of the sermon depends on this, not on a merely fragmentary impression. The subject should stand out clearly in outline in the mind of the preacher and this clearness of outline should appear in his discussion. The sort of topics that are adapted to the work of teaching should be chosen, or such proofs as will carry his argument if it be an argumentative discourse. They will be arranged clearly and methodically, so that they may be followed easily. The divisions will be, therefore, somewhat prominent and obtrusive. The theme will be broken up into its parts, each part will be examined by itself, and in its relations, and the whole subject as thus analyzed, will be presented in a closely organized manner. Not that the divisions must be mathematically formal. They

certainly should not run on in a formal manner, each topic in succession out of its predecessor, rather than directly out of the theme, as the scholastic sermon did, till the preacher had piled together an interminable mass of bulky fragments, a hundred or more, as we find even in preachers like Baxter and other Puritan preachers. But there will be a clearly outlined discussion that will do the work of discussion. The word "skeleton" has done duty in homiletics and it has frightened a good many modern preachers. But one might say a worse thing about a sermon than that it has a good skeleton, as one might say a worse thing about the human body than that it has a symmetrical form. It means that it is rationally and, in fact, æsthetically organized and that every one can see that it is. It does not mean simply that it is fleshless and lifeless. A didactic sermon, with a clear outline, need not be a skeleton in the objectionable sense that is is lifeless. A live sermon, just because it is such, demands structural quality, as any living organism of high grade demands it, demands it because it is an organism of high grade. The higher the organism, the more intricate and elaborate not only but the more manifest its structure. The lower the organism, the less manifest its structure. We speak of the "body" of the sermon. The name suggests a structure manifest enough to support the name. A structureless man of unorganized homiletic protoplasm has no developed body. We know the body of an organism from its parts.

(2) But with respect to the applicative or more practical sermon the chief object is impression, not teaching. Such impression is not wholly dependent on teaching. It is not a strong, complete mental conquest, but a strong, urgent, moral and emotional incentive, or succession of incentives that is sought. The object is to carry into the mind one simple, main thought, variously illustrated in such a way as

will leave impressions that will abide and do their work. The preaching of Dr. Alexander McKenzie of Cambridge, Mass., illustrates this method. In sermons of this sort it is not necessary to develop very fully the different groups of thought that lie in the theme, and lay them all out before the hearer in clear outline. It will only be necessary to take the main thought of the subject, which is simple, and illustrate and apply it in a variety of ways, somewhat as Dr. Chalmers did, although his subjects were not simple, somewhat as Bishop Brooks did, and as Dr. Bushnell never did. In this way there will, of course, be division, for to illustrate and apply a subject in any way, no matter how concretely, is in a sort to discuss it, for phases of the illustrated subject are brought out in succession. The leading thought will always be presented in different aspects. But such discussion will be relatively simple in the material and formal sense. It will not be argumentative or elaborately didactic. It may have but little of the formal, structural quality. Such structure as it may have will be that of the simpler class of organisms, in which the parts are not obtrusively manifest. We have here more of the synthetic process, as in the didactic sermon we have more of the analytic process. Here we may have more of the inductive, as there more of the deductive process.

IV. The Topics or Categories of the Outline

The word topic is a Greek rhetorical term in use before the time of Aristotle, but more fully developed by him. It means primarily the "*place*" where arguments or proofs are found for the use of the rhetorician and orator. For classical rhetoric and oratory dealt mostly with a type of speech in which arguments were used, such arguments as are appropriate to the sphere of probable as distinguished from demonstrative evidence, *i. e.*, popular rhetorical argu-

ments as distinguished from dialectical or philosophical arguments. The idea suggested is that arguments in connection with the subject, do not at once readily suggest themselves. They need to be hunted up. There is need of a "place" where they may be stored and found when demanded. Hence the rhetorical term "invention" which refers both to the discovery of the material of thought and to the methods of handling the material of thought. The study of classical rhetoric, therefore, was designed as an aid to public speakers in finding material and method for the development of their spteches. The orator's arguments or possible methods of treating his subject were stored up, *i. e.*, were classified and, as it were, gathered into a treasure house and there stood ready for use in this classified condition when sought.

Then by metonymy the word was applied to the arguments themselves. These arguments were known as the commonplaces or special places of men's reasoning, *i. e.*, the general or special methods of handling subjects discussed. Aristotle discusses twenty-eight of these general topics or methods of argument. The Latin term "loci communes" refers to the general method of conducting a popular argument, *i. e.*, methods that are common to any particular type of public speech. In classical rhetoric—Greek and Latin alike—there were three types of public speech, the deliberative, a persuasive type of political oratory, the judicial, a persuasive type of legal oratory, and the epideictic, a highly emotional type of eulogistic oratory. There were topics or methods of discussion especially adapted to each of these species of oratory, just as in preaching there are topics or methods of treatment that are adapted to the didactic, the ethical and the evangelistic types of discourse. The word topic, then, as applied to preaching means the methods of handling the sermon, methods of introducing the subject,

methods of stating it, methods of developing it and methods of concluding it. As used in our discussion it means methods of developing the theme or of planning the sermon. Topics then are the categories or classifications of thought used in preaching. A study of these classifications is a study of the principles of mental association or of those thought-relations that one may follow in the treatment of a subject.

The study has generally been regarded as a valuable one for a public speaker. The older writers on homiletics have more to say about it than the modern. The concrete method of study is particularly valuable, *i. e.*, an examination of the methods of different preachers in the handling of their themes. The methods they follow will depend largely on their mental bias and equipment. The preacher of a philosophical or logical habit of mind will follow methods that the man of imaginative or emotional or practical tendency will not follow. There is no better way of learning the peculiarities of a man's preaching or of getting at the preacher's leading tendencies than a study of his topics, or methods of handling his subjects. But the study of the methods themselves independently of their concrete products is of value. I shall discuss this in another connection. Just now I shall simply direct attention to some considerations to be taken into account in the choice of topics for the plan of the sermon.

A sermon is not good simply because it has a recognized plan. That depends on the sort of plan. The character of the plan depends on the character of the topics chosen. Note the following considerations.

1. The character of the topics should correspond with the character of the sermon, *i. e.*, with the subject of the sermon and with its object. The choice should not be made capriciously. There are reasons in the nature of the subject, and in the proper object, of the sermon and in the

proper thought-relation between the subject and object why one should choose one rather than another class or group of topics. Of course there is great range of possible choice. One can not lay down any hard and fast rule here. But it is evident enough that there are topics that are adapted to different types of sermon, I will add different types of the distinctively Christian sermon. There is a large variety of topics that readily adjust themselves to Christian themes. There are ways of looking at things that may be called pre-eminently Christian. There are Christian categories of thought, Christian commonplaces and special places. These topics readily adjust themselves to different types of sermons. For example, there are topics that are peculiarly adapted to didactic sermons. A very large number of our New Testament texts are didactic texts. They call for interpretation. Preaching must be largely expository. Now there are didactic topics that fit these texts and the subjects deduced from them. They might be called philosophical topics. They belong to the realm of abstract thought perhaps, although they may be stated concretely or representatively. In discussing such subjects we are likely to direct attention to the nature of the truth in hand, its fundamental principles, its characteristics, its implications, its necessity, its grounds or sources, its evidences, the objections against it, etc.

In handling an ethical sermon we look for topics that are adapted to ethical impression. Whatever touches the realm of duty, of moral necessity, of moral privilege, of moral aim or motive, whatever touches the domain of consequences, the realm of moral utility, of moral dignity, or grandeur or the realm of moral conviction, takes us at once into the topics that are adapted to the work of ethical inculcation. There are ethical topics that are distinctively Christian, and are peculiarly fitted to the work of moral impression that is characteristically Christian.

In dealing with the lighter class of sermons, sermons in which feeling and imagination abound, or of the more distinctively practical character, we look for topics that take us into the realm of concrete reality, the realm of illustration, of example, of experience. But it is the object, as well as the subject, that should determine the topics. Most sermons, therefore, call for a combination of the didactic and the practical class of topics. Let me illustrate from the two following plans that admirably recognize the difference between the didactic and the practical interest in preaching. Matt. 13:44. Theme; The Hidden Treasure. Didactic plan. 1. The Nature of it. 2. The value of it. Here the leading object is an interpretation of the parable. In order fully to understand it we must know the nature of it, we must understand what this hidden treasure is. But the object is not wholly didactic. It is partly practical. For this reason the hearer should have the value of it set before him. But the value is interpreted as well as inculcated. Therefore even the second topic is in part didactic. Practical plan. 1. It is so *hidden* that it must be *sought*. 2. It is so *manifest* that it may be *found*. 3. It is so *valuable* that its worth can not be *estimated*. 4. Yet it is to be so *greatly desired* that one must *surrender all* to get it. Now observe that in the first plan the object, is edification by increase of knowledge of the subject, first knowledge of the nature of the subject discussed, and secondly of its value, the more practical thought which, therefore, comes last. Note also that in the practical plan the two main topics of the didactic plan, nature and value, are not only expanded but are shaped in the statement with supreme reference to practical impression. It is a hidden treasure. But in the practical discussion the hidden quality of it is so shaped as to serve an ethical purpose, *i. e.*, because hidden it must be sought. Again, it is not hopelessly hidden. It is so manifest that it

may be found. Hence we are encouraged to seek it. It is *valuable*. But it is so valuable that one can not worthily estimate it. It is, moreover, so valuable that one must surrender all to win it.* All this will illustrate the important results that would follow careful discrimination in the choice of methods. By such discrimination one will avoid a stereotyped method of handling the sermon. Each sermon will have its own plan, as conditioned by its character and aim. There is more involved in this whole matter than appears at the surface or than the ordinary preacher understands.

2. The number of the topics, or the extent of the plan will also be determined by the character of the sermon, *i. e.*, by the aim of the sermon as well as the character of the subject. The didactic and particularly the doctrinal or argumentative sermon, that aims to do full justice to the subject, in general, demands a more elaborate and extensive plan than the lighter and more practical sermon. But no invariable rule can be laid down. Even here the proper aim of the sermon will necessarily limit the extent of the plan. Many didactic sermons, like the one above cited, have but few main topics. They are likely, however, to have a good many subordinate topics. Note in passing that the didactic sermon in the hands of an unfruitful preacher is likely to handle a certain limited number of topics and so result in a stereotyped method. This may be true of all classes of sermons in such hands. But it is particularly true of sermons of this class.

Note also that the modern sermon of whatever class has but relatively few topics. The plan is brief and simple. This is perhaps due to the fact that it is less doctrinal and therefore must be less elaborate. It is due also to the influence of modern literary culture and to the practical

* These two plans are from some German writer on homiletics whose name the author has forgotten.

tendency to combine the interest of the object with that of the subject more fully than our homiletic ancestors did. The older method secured doctrinally instructive preaching. The newer method more suggestive and animating preaching. It is a less formal, less stereotyped and a more vital and organic method of handling the material of the sermon. Note further that any plan presupposes the discussion of more than a single topic or phase of the subject. There are at least two main topics with subdivisions, and perhaps three or four. One may, indeed, select a single limited phase of a subject and treat it illustratively. But this phase is the theme and the illustrations that present it in a variety of aspects are in effect the topics. Moreover, all the topics, whether many or few, should yield themselves naturally to the preacher's pressure upon his theme and should not be forced out by far-fetched association of ideas.

3. The topics all come out of the theme as a whole, and do not represent a mere fragment of it. It is the theme as a unit that yields each topic. One can not discuss a part or a fragment of the complex theme at one point and some phase of the whole theme at another point without introducing confusion and contradiction. That is to say; one can not change or reduce or mutilate his theme in the process of discussion. Moreover the topics should represent and make manifest and felt the object as well as the subject of the sermon. When they run out of the theme as conditioned by the object, the whole sermon is held in unity and within proper limits. One of the serious defects of the old scholastic sermon was that the topics did not run back to the theme as conditioned by the proper object of the sermon, nor did they all run back to the theme as a unit. The successive topics related themselves each to the other, one point suggested another and that another and so the sermon drifted away from the theme following the lead of successive divi-

sions and in the process forgot its proper object. The topics of the plan are normally related to each other. They properly do not overlap. They are mutually exclusive. Each topic discusses a single phase of the theme at the exclusion of all others, and each is of its own kind. One can not discuss the "how" or the "why" under the category of the "what." "Result" can not be discussed under the category of "cause." Simplicity of content is the point. Each topic has in the quality of its thought a relative independence of all other topics. One can not turn back in the discussion of a topic to pick up something that belongs to a previous topic, nor reach forward to any subsequent topic and anticipate the discussion of it. Such confusion of thought wrecks the logic of the sermon.

4. The topics are arranged with reference to unity and progress of impression. The didactic topics are naturally arranged in logical order and with reference to unity and progress of mental impression. The practical topics, or such as are chosen with reference to rhetorical and practical impression, are naturally arranged in what is called rhetorical order, or with reference to unity, and progress of emotional or ethical or more comprehensively practical impression. It is not impossible, however, to combine the two objects, arranging them with reference at once to unity and progress of mental and of emotional and ethical impression.

V. Value of the Outline

The planning of the sermon consists in the choice and arrangements of topics. The value of the plan is the value of the topics in evolving, interpreting and applying the thought content of the theme. The only way of getting at the right topics and thus securing the right plan for the sermon is to get at them from the inside rather than the outside, *i. e.*, by analyzing and sifting the thought material

of the text and theme, getting at the groups or centres of thought that lie there and then selecting such topics as naturally evolve themselves from these groups of thought and are adapted to the object of the sermon and arranging them in order. The old method of storing up topics and drawing on them at will as from an external storehouse was very defective. It resulted in externality and artificiality of treatment. It laid undue emphasis upon form as distinguished from substance. It resulted in stereotyped method. The preacher who picks his topics from the outside, without entering into the elements of the subject, or having respect to his object, who lays them on ab-extra, or inserts them as in an artificial frame-work, will preach mechanically and his product will be wooden. This will result again in superficiality. What is formal is sure to be superficial. Thoroughness is possible only for one who evolves his topics after thorough investigation of his text and subject. This external method also results in simply taking out of the subject what one has put into it. If one draws out his topics from the substance of thought in his theme, if he analyses, classifies and groups his material according to its natural thought-relations and according to the demands of the object of the sermon, he will get what is in the subject, and not what he imports into it. But a proper selection and use of topics is simply a proper planning of the sermon, and this is of supreme importance in the work of the preacher. Some of the best preachers like the late Dr. Magee, Anglican Archbishop of York, have spent years in careful training with respect to the ordering of the thought of their sermons. What I wish to do is to point out the importance of the careful planning of the sermon from three points of view.

1. And first its value with respect to the production of material. (1) A study of the plan, which is a study of

topics, is necessary to disclose the resources of the subject. It results in a thorough knowledge of it. One knows his theme analytically, knows it in its thought-relations and so in its possibilities of development. One tests its possibilities by trying many methods. This discloses the resources of the subject, and this aids in invention. Without such analysis one can not know the possibilities of his theme. The material of the sermon is locked up there. It is entirely hidden until it is unlocked and brought to light. It must be discovered, classified, grouped about its proper centres. This done, one knows its scope and range, and what it is worth for use. A mine, hitherto unknown, has been opened. Its treasures run in veins that are concealed until the preacher has entered and opened them up. That is, there has been set in movement the action of mental association, and the thought-relations of the subject have been laid bare. We speak of fruitful themes. What are they? They are themes that open up to the mind their complexities and wide-ranging relations of thought. There is doubtless a difference in themes in this regard. Some are in themselves more fruitful than others. But it is largely a relative matter, relative to the resources, the aptitude, the attitude, and the activity of the preacher. The only way to know whether a subject is fruitful or not is to thrust in the probe and test it by opening up its thought-relations in a well-ordered plan. It is this tested capacity of the subject to open itself up to the mind that quickens mental action. It may also quicken the imagination and in so doing may quicken the emotions and possibly the moral and spiritual susceptibilities, as one gets inside of it. This is a condition of homiletic productiveness. By the fruitfulness of a subject then, we mean its capacity to yield its treasures to topical analysis and arrangement. One may find that subjects, which at first seemed barren, will open with wonder-

ful interest and productiveness when subjected to the test of analysis. The habit of sketching outlines along different lines of mental association is a valuable one. The outlines show the subject in different lights, in different relations. And this agitation of thought in its various relations will yield a wealth of material from which one may select for the particular line at last chosen. (2) I have already suggested that a study of the plan may quicken mental and emotional activity. But it may be well to linger with it. The mind is at home only in the realm of order. Get it on to the right track, set it in movement along the right line and it will move freely and vigorously. It must move normally in the investigation of a subject, *i. e.*, it must move in line with its own laws. If it gets at cross purposes with itself, it ceases to act. Every earnest thinker knows the glow of enthusiasm with which he enters a subject, when he sees that he is on the right track, that the way opens up broadly and that he has free range as along a great highway. Recall Robert Hall's declaration that he could do nothing as a preacher till he had "cut out a channel" for his thoughts. It is a grand experience for a preacher to know the joy of mental and emotional and spiritual freedom in moving along the lead of a great religious truth that opens up its broad avenues before him. (3) A careful study of the plan is necessary for the selection of the right sort of material, material fitted to the particular sort of sermon in hand, or to the particular object of the sermon, or to the audience. It rescues preaching from caprice. We often wonder why preachers pitch upon certain themes in their use of texts and why they handle them as they do. Possibly they do not know thoroughly well themselves, or do not know that they know or how they know. It sometimes seems almost a matter of chance, or of caprice. Suitable reflection and choice based on such

reflection would secure pertinence and harmony in the discussion, for just the topics needed are available. Such reflection will secure variety in treatment. A stereotyped method is the product of the preacher's unfamiliarity with the possible categories of thought that might be evolved from the subject. Familiarity with them would put the preacher upon the work of developing the sermon variously. One category suggests another. Reflection and choice secure variety,—variety not only in the treatment of subjects, but variety as to the types of the sermon. For it enables one to distinguish between methods that are appropriate to different classes of sermons. It is also an aid in discriminating with respect to methods of handling, not only the theme, but other parts of the sermon. It helps one in the work of introduction, in deducing themes from texts and in concluding the sermon. In this way, one acquires facility in the handling of his sermons. But it is of special value in shaping any sort of sermon with reference to the realization of its proper object. Not everything may be said in any sermon that might be said, or that one would like to say, or that the audience might like to have one say, or that the subject, in and of itself, and by itself might sanction one in saying. For the sermon is not a thesis or a treatise or a disquisition, not something for the eye to be read and studied. It is an oratorical product for the ear. It must be caught at once. It is limited by its character and function as an address. It is designed to open up a subject, not for the sake of the subject alone in its wide-reaching relations of thought but for the purpose of influencing an audience. One may say, therefore, only what the object of the sermon requires one to say. As to its quality, quantity and method this material should be fitted to the realization of this object. A process of selection, therefore, is necessary. Now, it is the plan that conditions

this selection. It binds the sermon to the end in view. One who has no well-planned method of conducting his discussion, not only does not know what to say with reference to the demands of the subject but of the object as well. He strikes wildly. In fact without a well-ordered plan one can not have a well-considered aim at all. A house may be built as easily as a sermon without a plan. Planning is a process of "natural selection" and exclusion, the result of which binds the sermon to its proper objective point.

2. The value of well-ordered arrangement with reference to the logical qualities of the sermon or its organic relations of thought. There are thought-relations that bind the sermon and hold it in logical consistency. They secure harmony and preclude the possibility of logical discords. (1) Unity is essential to harmony in the thought-relations of a sermon. The sermon is one whole. It discusses one theme and has one chief ultimate aim. The theme may be complex and the aim may be complex, but there is only one main thought and one chief aim. This thought should be so presented to the mind as to leave unity of mental impression in all varieties of thought and should be so shaped that it will have unity of ethical impression in all its varieties of ethical incentive. This double unity, unity of subject and of object, of thought and of impression, should be wrought into one harmonious whole. Unity of thought in preaching has received chief emphasis. This has been regarded as homiletic unity by preëminence. This is because the didactic element has been so prominent in Protestant preaching especially. The aim has been to do justice to the subject. But the aim should also be to do justice to the object. Preaching should include what is characteristic in dramatic impression. Dramatic unity aims at one supreme resulting impression. All the forces of character and of plot are brought to bear, concentrate upon one point. Didactic unity seeks one supreme

result in thought. It will hold all the elements of thought bound back to one centre. But homiletic unity should also pour all the forces of personality, as well as of thought, in the handling of the sermon, concentrate upon one moral result. The need of this double unity is grounded in the constitution of the human soul. Let a speaker secure one strong, leading mental impression and at the same time one strong emotional and moral impression and he has wrought a result which the soul by the very make of it, craves, and which is conducive to its welfare, for it is conducive to its quickening, enlargement and growth. We are not at home with disharmony. The end of all high art is unity and harmony. It is perhaps preëminently so in that greatest and noblest of all arts in some aspects, the art of effective public speech. The highest sort of moral quickening and enlargement may be conditioned by it. (2) Completeness is also essential to the harmonious thought-relations of a sermon. Unity of subject and object commit it to completeness, for it must bring out what there is in the subject conceived as one whole and in such way and to such extent as will realize its object. As the germ of the sermon the theme should grow into the fully-developed organism. Without the development of what belongs to it and is procommitted to it by the theme, it is a mutilated product, just as any organism would be mutilated that should not contain what properly belongs to it and is pledged to it by virtue of the fact that it is an organism. Completeness, however, is relative, relative to the specific conception and statement of the theme. For what is necessary to bring out adequately the meaning of the theme as conceived and stated is essential. It is relative to the line of thought chosen. For what is essential to this line of thought should be brought out. But completeness is also relative to the aim of the sermon. For what will fit the sermon for the re-

alization of its object should come into discussion. Well now, it is careful analysis that settles this to a considerable extent, at the outset. When once one has arranged the elements of his theme according to a scheme that has reference to a given impression, he will, of course, know the better whether the sermon will discuss the subject as it should be discussed.

(3) Symmetry also is necessary to harmony. A sermon may have a certain unity and completeness, and yet lack symmetry, *i. e.*, proportion of parts. A single topic may have a prominence and fulness of development disproportionate to its intrinsic importance, *e. g.*, its importance as a phase of the subject, or disproportionate as related to the object of the sermon, so as to throw what is of equal or greater importance into the background. The sermon is a disproportionate whole. It is injured, not simply as a work of art, but as an effective instrument. Unity of mental and moral impression may be injured. A mechanical symmetry, or a proportion of parts that satisfies the eye as it rests upon the page or the ear as it listens to the sermon, a sort of French artistic pedantry, is not the thing advocated, but a proportion as related to mental and moral impression. Now, this proportion is assured by a process of methodical arrangement of the elements of the theme. Without a carefully-arranged plan in the mind one is likely to overelaborate one or two topics that interest him most at the time and to leave too little time for the expansion of other topics of equal or even of greater importance for the success of the sermon. Preachers are likely to overwork the first one or two topics and to crowd or mutilate the latter part of the sermon, so that it lacks rhetorical effectiveness. A methodical outlining of the whole subject based on a careful survey of it at the outset might result in an avoidance of this.

(4) Finally progress is essential to harmony, an orderly movement from one landing-place to another and from the less to the more important topics of discussion. "A Sermon" says Vinet, "is a procession, not a promenade." It may be one, may be complete, may be proportionate, and yet disorderly, the parts are all there, all related to the whole, all there in symmetrical development, all running on to one goal, and yet the parts may be displaced. A disorderly or a disarranged whole is a monstrosity in art as in nature. Each part of a sermon should have a relative completeness of its own, while it somehow leads up to the next part beyond it and so holds the hearer in the line of movement to the end. Careful planning of the sermon distributes the topics and sets them in their proper places. Progress is an important mark of an oratorical product. The essay may circle about a centre of thought and make no head. The oration, the address, the sermon must move on. It should be in some sort a triumphant movement. To reach successfully the crown-heights of an oratorical process is to secure the supreme impression sought. Cumulative power, the power that adds stroke after stroke to the impression, each successive stroke more effective than its predecessor and the last most effective of all, this is essential to the best oratorical effects. Now it is evident enough that careful planning of the sermon will secure it against a zig-zag or retrograde movement. No preacher can develop an effective plan and flat out in anti-climax.

3. The value of careful outline with refernce to rhetorical expression. Logic is practically a part of rhetoric. In homiletics it deals with the relations of thought not for its own sake as a science, and not for the sake merely of regulating the thinking of the preacher, but with reference to practical use in the art of speech and with reference to practical results in dealing with men. Logical effectiveness

is, therefore, a part of the problem of rhetorical effectiveness. Other things being equal, the more effectively ordered thought is, the more effectively uttered it is likely to be. Three elements of rhetorical effectiveness may be conditioned by homiletic order, clearness, force, grace.

(1) Clearness. A clear expression of thought depends not merely upon lucidity of diction, but upon clearness of conception, and of arrangement. Perspicacity is necessary to perspicuity. Thought can not be clearly uttered if it be not clearly apprehended. But both clearness of apprehension and clearness of diction may be largely dependent on clearness of arrangement. Disorderly method may involve one in obscurity of thought and this will unfavorably affect one's clearness of diction. The truth must be seen in its relations. A subject is mastered only when it is mastered in its relations. It is not well handled if it be not handled in its logical relations. We take in groups of objects in space, if we do it thoroughly, by individualizing the objects in succession and then holding them in their relations to the whole. And so we take in what moves in time, as the sermon does, by objects that mark relation and succession. We get the whole by getting the parts. If one can not arrange his thoughts under a definite subject he is not yet ready to begin work. He has not attained to a well-balanced conception and to a clear comprehension of what he would be at. He should keep at it till his thoughts fall into line like troops at an officer's command. Who can fail to see that Frederick Robertson's clear-cut, incisive preaching was due largely to his orderly method? He mastered his subject. The result was that he said the right thing in the right place. I believe that the crystalline clearness of his style was largely conditioned by his grasp of the subject in hand. To say that a man is a clear thinker is to say that he has thought his subject through, that he has a clear

perception of it in its relations of thought, and that in so doing he has mastered it. A clear style is dependent on this. Not even inspiration itself could neutralize the ineffectiveness of a shambling, inconsequential method of handling a subject. There are preachers, suggestive preachers we call them, who do not care to expose their outline. Their thought and diction may be clear enough, for obtrusion of outline is not always necessary to correctness and clearness of outline. But one can not name an educative and edifying preacher, whose work has permanent results, whose sermons are seriously defective in structural quality or who has no well-defined outline. Educative preaching, which is in the fullest sense edifying preaching, whose mark is clearness of thought and expression, will always value the clearly-manifest division. If one aims also at immediate, vivid, cumulative rhetorical impression of the best sort, he will look out for his method. Recall the judicious words of Phillips Brooks.* "Give your sermon an orderly, consistent progress, and do not hesitate to let your hearers see it distinctly, for it will help them first to understand and then to remember what you say." This advice is perhaps the more weighty that he was willing to give it in the face of the fact that he was not always scrupulously faithful to it in his own preaching.

(2) Force. Vigorous preaching is not wholly a matter of incisive individual thought, or of intense rhetorical expression. Essay-writers, like Emerson, have doubtless a vigor of their own which is not dependent on clear order of thought. But the vigor of the essayist is not that which is demanded in preaching. Forcefulness of pulpit style is partly a question of method. A vigorous sermon should be tense and cumulative. It should be organized closely, move rapidly, and rise as it moves. It should press straight on to its goal,

*Yale Lectures, Lecture V. Page 178.

and each part should push the movement vigorously on. If one seeks strength of impression, he must say with himself and mean it. "This one thing I do: I press on." Now, this means orderly movement. A discussion that flows on at its "own sweet will" easily flows beyond proper bounds and becomes ineffective, because it is straggling and thin. But a thorough discussion, thorough in its order, with thoughts marshalled as a general marshals his troops and hurls them upon one point, is wonderously intense and effective. This is the Napoleonic strategy of the pulpit orator. In forensic oratory most great triumphs have been won in this way. The orator marshalls his material, pushes it on toward one point, secures cumulative force for it as it moves, gathers it all up at the end and as Theodore Parker says of a great English orator, "lets the ruin fly." Many of the triumphs of the pulpit—rhetorically speaking—have been won in something the same way. The sermon that is intense in its vigor, is condensed as being compacted together and crowded upon its objective point. and it is compact because methodical and methodical because thoroughly thought out and planned. Theodore Parker, who knew the great orators, knew the secret of their method and realized something of it in his own preaching. "Nothing," we are told,* "was commenced until a brief or scheme of it lay complete upon his desk. When reading and meditation, taking copious notes meanwhile, had furnished him with a view of the whole subject, so that he saw not only the end from the beginning, but the details and subdivisions of each head, he began to write * * * * * He never undertook to lay his track until he had made a most careful and methodical survey of the route he must travel. He was all the time making statements and organizing thought. How many

* Weiss' Life and Correspondence of Theodore Parker, vol. ii pages 8, 9, 12, 13.

clergymen use their brains for bait, and wait in resignation for the nibble of a text." (3) Grace. Elegance of literary style is not merely a matter of syntax and vocabulary. This is one of the commonplaces of rhetoric. A semi-poetic diction and fluent syntax alone do not secure grace or elegance of utterance. Nor is it wholly a matter of thought and feeling. It is a question of method as well. Writers on rhetoric and homiletics have not minimized this fact. Prof. Shedd has some discriminating words upon it.* In pulpit speech we need grace of form as well as of color. Vocabulary may furnish color, but structure yields grace of form. "Drawing gives the skeleton," says Balzac, "and color gives the life; but life without the skeleton is a far more incomplete thing than the skeleton without the life."† Order, proportion, unity, harmony, progress, these are important elements in grace of pulpit style. Mere verbal decorations are tawdry. If a sermon lacks order, it lacks elegance. It was not ornamentation alone that constituted the elegance of Jeremy Taylor's pulpit style. Dr. Thomas Guthrie's style had color, but his preaching lacked the highest qualities of elegance. The sermon that has good method with fresh and well-expressed thought will always be interesting. We are carried along by a clear, steady, orderly movement of suggestive thought. A disorderly sermon is sure to lead to disagreeable surprises. One doesn't know what will turn up next. It is a great mistake to imagine that an æsthetic interest is promoted by abandoning clearness of outline, as if it were of no importance. A man who is alive will have no stiff, formal, artificial method in the pulpit, but *method* he will have, method that is the product of life. Such method will have grace of movement from beginning, through all transitions, to the end.

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* Homiletics Chap. III.

† Balzac on Painting in "The Hidden Masterpiece," page 317.

CHAPTER IV

THE DEVELOPMENT

THE development is the expansion of the outline. It is the outline brought into full form. It is not the direct expansion of the theme, but of the plan. The structureless germ, the theme, becomes structural in the plan, and the development brings out the full-grown organism. It has been called the "beginning of the battle." Carrying out this military figure, we may call the choice of theme the selection of the battle-ground, and the plan the disposition or arrangement of forces, the battle-array. The development, therefore, is the battle according to the arrangement of the plan. The battle opening with the beginning of the development, the introduction would be the skirmish line. The development, therefore, belongs to structural as well as to material homiletics.

I. METHODS OF DEVELOPMENT

The development should, of course, produce the kind of sermon and realize the object to which the theme and outline precommit it. Comprehensively stated, however, it should always undertake to do two things. It should interpret the truth in discussion to the mind, so far as it needs interpretation, and it should apply the truth to practical interests. The development will, therefore, be of two general sorts. It will be partly didactic and partly persuasive. Here once more we come back to the nature and object of Christian preaching in its most comprehensive conception. The two interests may conceivably be separated. A sermon may be

wholly didactic or wholly persuasive. But, as already suggested, the ordinary sermon should have reference to both of these interests. It is well if they interblend and are not wholly separate. The teaching sermon may well have a practical aim and a concrete form, and the impressional or persuasive sermon may well presuppose and rest upon a didactic basis. There need be no hard and fast line between them. The best sort of sermon in general interprets to the mind what needs interpretation and at the same time makes practical application of it. It reaches as large a number of the faculties as possible. It speaks to the mind, to the imagination, to the conscience, to the emotions and it impels to action. In different types of sermon, however, there will naturally be preponderance of the one or the other quality. There are three possible ways of introducing these elements into a sermon. It may be done by separating them, as the scholastic sermon did, or its successor the old New England doctrinal sermon. Here we have first exposition, or discussion, or argument and then application. This was largely the method of Saurin, the great French Protestant preacher, of the preachers of the Anglican Church in the seventeenth century; South and Barrow, whom Henry Ward Beecher followed in a measure in his early preaching, and of Dr. Emmons of Massachusetts, who always separated argument from application. It may be done, secondly, by giving the sermon that is prevailingly didactic a continuous practical turn, as well as by the introduction of inferential and more distinctively practical thoughts at the end. The method largely of Dr. Horace Bushnell. Or thirdly, it may be done by giving the sermon that is prevailingly impressional so vigorous a grip upon the mind by the skillful use of expository methods that it at once interests and instructs as well as moves the hearer. This was characteristic of the preaching of Phillips

Brooks. But let us consider these two methods of development in succession. It is, of course, understood that the two are separated only for purposes of analysis.

1. The didactic development. (1) Consider first its value. It is necessary to the practical effectiveness of preaching. The preacher is a public teacher. He should wish to be the intellectual leader of his people. It is a mistake to suppose that even common people, so-called, are interested in preaching in proportion as it is uninstructive. Properly handled, instructive preaching can not fail to be effective. The average man is inquisitive, especially about the problems of religion. A clear, vigorous, illustratively persuasive handling of a religious theme will have attraction for such a mind. The too common defect in didactic preaching is that it does not come to the hearer in appropriate popular form. The pulpit problem is not to say just as little as possible, but to put substantial thought into attractive concrete form. The element of success, if we may speak of it as having any success, in so-called sensational preaching, is not its poverty of material, but its vivacity and concreteness of form. Such speech is attractive. But it is a great mistake to imagine that good thinking is proportionately unattractive. Preaching should never degenerate into a barren intellectualism. That is not preaching. But it should be masculine in quality. It should have some mental grip. Sentiment, fancy, feeling are necessary in preaching, but they may degenerate into sentimentalism or sensationalism of an offensive sort. True didactic preaching, which is sound thinking put in concrete, popular form, avoids the extreme of intellectualism on the one side and of sentimentalism or sensationalism on the other.

It secures an intelligent faith and builds up strong character. It deals with men as rational beings. It furnishes intelligent and intelligible reasons for accepting the truth

that is necessary to build character. It need not be polemical, nor even apologetic, and yet somehow or other, that which is felt to be the truth must be seen to be the truth. (2) Consider, secondly, some of its methods. There are various methods of expounding or interpreting the truth or of getting thought out before the mind. Some of them are particularly well adapted to the work of pulpit teaching. Writers on rhetoric have discussed them copiously, and there is no need to linger with them in their pulpit applications. But a few of them may well be noted. The method of generalization is employed by the most thoughtful and instructive as well as persuasive preachers of our day. I have spoken of it in other relations, but it may well be touched upon in connection with the development of the sermon. Of course, the choice of topics conditions largely the didactic method of the development. But to touch upon it in this immediate connection is hardly repetition. It was the opinion of Mosheim, the reformer of German preaching, that in the higher class of didactic sermons a general view of the subject or the comprehensive and under-running principles of the truth in discussion should always be presented. It is a matter of observation that those preachers who generalize their discussions, who show that the particular truth in hand has wide-reaching relations and exemplifications in various realms of thought and experience, are peculiarly instructive, attractive and helpful preachers. They show that Christian truth is not provincial, but cosmopolitan, and they thus show its reasonableness. Particularization is the opposite method. The use of it as an expository method makes preaching definite and specific. It holds attention for the time to but the one thing in hand and intensifies impression. Inference or deduction or what is called reflection is another method. A large amount of expository work, larger than one would imagine, consists in inferential

reflections upon the subject in discussion. We are always running off into the rivulets of thought that flow from the main stream. These inferential deductions are valuable methods of interpreting a subject, for the reason that they expand and broaden the significance of the main thought. They suggest its productiveness. They show the subject in its logical thought-relations. Contrast is another method. Example another. Citation, which is a sort of appeal to authority, is another. Expansion by iteration is still another. In didactic discourse, which is not to be read but heard, and must be taken in at once, iteration becomes necessary, for thought needs expansion for the purpose of elucidation. Repeating thought in various forms brings out its inner significance. Lawyers know its value. And so do political orators like Edmund Burke. Preachers like Dr. Alexander McKenzie have learned the art of iteration and thus make their discussions the more luminous and attractive, if not the more weighty. Observe, iteration avails itself of antithesis and draws on the opposite pole of thought for light. Various forms of analogy are valuable in the teaching development. One thing is set in analogous relation with another. Each throws light upon the other, because they belong to the same family. It shows how wide-ranging principles are and how things at first seemingly diverse are held together in the unity of a fundamental law. Hence the possibility of classification and generalization. The field of analogy is a wide one. It is furnished by every department of knowledge. The point to be especially noted in the use of analogy, is, as Whateley has pointed out,* that the likeness is in the relations of the objects brought into comparison and not in the objects themselves, and these objects belong to different spheres. There may be little or no resemblance between the ob-

* Rhetoric, Chap. II, page 118.

jects themselves that belong to these different spheres, but in their relations they may be alike, *e. g.*, the analogy in the parable of the Prodigal Son is not primarily between beings but between the relations of beings belonging to two different spheres. The likeness is not primarily between God and a human father but between God's relation to man and a father's relation to his son. Any species of analogy, except the strained analogy called allegory, may be used in the didactic development. It has always been an attractive and valuable didactic method. The pulpit is heir to it. The man who is skillful in handling it gets a hearing. Works like that of Prof. Drummond, "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," secure an attention somewhat disproportionate to their real merits, perhaps, because the use of analogy is so attractive. And it is rather surprising that a method of presenting the truth which is preëminently a New Testament method, an almost distinguishing peculiarity of the form in which Christian revelation appears, a method that makes Christ quite unique as a teacher of religion, should not be more generally cultivated in the pulpit. A free use of analogy, both of the illustrative and the augmentative sort, would be a very effective method of conveying Christian truth. Argument as a method of didactic development calls for brief consideration. Its importance for the work of the pulpit has doubtless been overestimated. The object of a sermon is the discussion of truth with reference to practical results. All teaching, therefore, should have some of the elements of persuasion. It is the object of a convincing discussion that it should be made a persuasive discussion. In fact a truly convincing statement is in an important sense a truly persuasive statement and argument is not always necessary to make a statement convincing. Most Biblical truths are hardly adapted to elaborate argument. Clear statement may be

a substitute. The most convincing preaching is often simply affirmatory of what is assumed, and may well be assumed, to be generally recognized as true. It is an appeal to what is common, to common sense, common conscience, common sentiment, common observation and experience. It may be a statement of fact or a statement of principle. Whatever it be, the assumption is that the truth of what is affirmed may somehow be recognized without being scientifically demonstrated. It may take the form of exposition or of illustration or of inference as well as of argument. After all but relatively few are convinced of religious truth by sheer argument. Belief is the product of a great variety of influences. The example of Christ and of his Apostles may be noted here. Christianity was not propagated by logical argument. It refused to avail itself of such methods. The arguments of Christ, so far as we may speak of his teaching as argument at all, are not an attempt at demonstration. Of course, they furnish reasons for accepting the truth, and so far forth they are proofs. But they are not attempts at demonstration. So with the teaching of the Apostles. They speak as by moral and religious authority. Their arguments are of the popular, *ad hominem* sort. They assume not only a common sense, or a common capacity of mental judgement, but capacity of imagination of feeling and of moral and spiritual conviction. They assume a considerable measure of common experience with life, of common moral and religious training and of general preparation to receive the truth, when once it is rightly presented. The object is to get at the inner life, to intensify moral and religious conviction, to remove difficulties by a clear, suggestive and persuasive presentation of the truth. It is not to push the truth upon the mind by processes of logical proof. The presentation is largely exposition in popular form. The parable, as used by our Lord, is an expository

method. It is exposition by illustration. It is also a sort of argument. As it interprets it presents reasons for belief. It reasons by exposition. Paul reasons from popular analogies. Argumentative preaching is relatively modern. It was not, in the scientific sense, known to the primitive church. Scholasticism did not originate it, but it fixed it. This involved, if not a false, an extreme conception of the needs of the pulpit. Doubtless it did its work after a fashion. But it is past. Biblical preaching corrects the extremes of the dialectical methods on the one side and of the hortatory or non-discussional method on the other side. It unites in due proportion the rational and the ethical and spiritual. The chief aim is to make Christianity seem reasonable and natural in the sense of reasonable, and this may be done without formal argument. It is hardly worth while to discuss the argumentative method of development.

And yet a few words may be desirable. There are three points of view from which we may look at pulpit argument, that of quality, order and tone.

As regards the quality of homiletic argument, it is demanded first of all that it be substantial and cogent. "A lame and impotent conclusion" is likely to involve a lame and impotent process of reasoning, which is a discredit to the preacher. If one undertakes a line of reasoning, he should make it thorough. A preacher loses influence by an ineffectual attempt at it. The weakness of his argument is charged either to his own intellectual incompetency or to the weakness of his case, and in either event he is discredited, in the one case personally, in the other professionally. Processes of reasoning should also be adapted to the capacities of one's audience. A line of reasoning that will satisfy one class of people may not satisfy another. What is sufficient for an untrained mind will not satisfy

the trained mind. What convinces the man of easy belief, may not convince the sceptic. What reaches a candid mind may not touch a prejudiced mind. What comes home at once to a man of imaginative and emotional temperament may find no response from a hard-headed logician. Reasoning from the Scriptures may have weight with a Christian congregation, but to rely wholly upon such reasoning would be inadequate to its needs, and much more inadequate to the demands of an unbelieving congregation. The ordinary hearer is impressed by analogical reasoning. But such reasoning is chiefly of negative value. It does not satisfy all the demands of the mind and much of it is wholly inconclusive. Argument from facts has increasing weight. It is a form of appeal to experience. Christ made his appeal to facts. He claimed that there were certain patent facts that attested his messianic claims. Paul defended his "Gospel" by an appeal to alleged facts, the facts of Christ's resurrection and manifestation to him. An appeal to common-sense judgment and to common or personal moral sense, or to the best witnessing of religious feeling is generally successful with those who have been morally and religiously trained. But others may demand the logical forms of premise, proof and conclusion.

As regards the structure or arrangement of argument, the chief demand is that it shall be so ordered as to be readily apprehensible. The order will depend on the sort of argument. In moral reasoning that seeks a strong final impression the cumulative process is necessary. The weightiest argument in the line comes last for the reason that the last word is supposed to be the most weighty and impressive and that it gathers unto itself and supports and gets support from all that precedes. Simplicity of order and of statement is another requisite. Involved, laborious, long-drawn processes of reasoning are outlawed in our day be-

cause they are intolerably tedious. In days when people had more leisure and more patience they would tolerate them and seemed to thrive upon them. But no one follows them now and their value at any time is questionable. The weight of a man's arguments is of more importance than the number.

With respect to the tone of one's reasoning, the primal requisite is candor. No preacher who is a special pleader or who shuffles or evades difficulties, can hold the confidence of right-minded people. Candor is of special importance in the discussion of religious problems and above all in the use of Scripture arguments. Unfair reasoning is heavily discounted. There is a large element of personal faith in people's acceptance of a candid man's reasonings. Assent is often secured quite as much by confidence in the candor of the man as by the cogency of his arguments. With candor should be associated positiveness and strength of conviction. The judicial, the positive and candid attitude of mind seeks the truth for its own sake or as a positive moral good. The apologetic is therefore more satisfactory than the polemic method. Polemic discussion easily degenerates into partisanship, into uncandidness and unfairness and may readily become personal and bitter. The fighting pulpiteer seeks a personal or partisan advantage, rather than the liberation of truth and the conquest of error.

(3) Some of the sources of the didactic development may well be considered. The choice of topics will measurably condition the thought-material of the development. But it is also a specific question for the development itself. There are general sources upon which the preacher relies for his material of thought and of which he avails himself in the use of various expository or didactic methods. All the material of one's education and culture is, of course,

a source from which one continually draws. But just here we deal with some of the specific sources.

The Scriptures are one of these sources. We use the Bible, not only as the basis for our themes and as the basis for topics, as in the textual method, but in the process of development as well. We make an immediate use of it and in ways other than as proof-texts. It is difficult to use detached proof-texts wisely. A false or inadequate interpretation is almost inevitable. For this reason they are generally avoided in our day. But Scripture material may be successfully used in a great variety of ways, *e. g.*, by citing its biographical and historical material illustratively, by citing its acknowledged general truths and principles, by citations and the use of its rhetorical and poetic diction. If preachers were more familiar with their English Bibles, they would probably make more copious use of it. It is a source of very instructive and interesting material. Scotch and Welsh preachers make abundant use of it and they are for this reason among the most interesting and edifying of preachers. The value of such use in giving the people an acquaintance with the Bible can not be over-estimated. We appeal to the Bible primarily because we assume that it bears the authority of revelation. It presupposes also a response in our moral and religious natures. On this basis we use it even in speaking to those who are not professedly Christians, and in fact even to those who may deny the truth and authority of revelation. But its most successful use, of course, presupposes Christian experience, *i. e.*, the witness of the inner life and of the teaching Spirit answering to the witness of Scriptures without. To the response of native intelligence, conviction, feeling, is added the response of Christian faith. It assumes that Christian truth is verifiable in Christian experience. Hence, of course, Biblical material will have greatest weight with the Christian sec-

tion of the congregation, and it is most appropriate in pastoral preaching in connection with the worship of a Christian assembly. But it does not always assume the authority of revelation. The Bible is a body of human literature as well as a record of divine revelation. It is a treasure-house of human experiences as well as of heavenly teachings. It is a source of illustration as well as of authority, a store-house of suggestion as well as of proof. It speaks to the imagination, the sentiments, the feelings as well as to the mind and the conscience, and in the use of it as such the preacher may be eminently instructive as well as quickening. We use the Bible as a literary product. It is a source of fresh, attractive material that may be used suggestively as well as argumentatively and this is a didactic use. It is noteworthy that the use of Scriptures by Christ and the New Testament writers as a direct source of proof in argument, is relatively infrequent. The more common use is in the way of fruitful suggestion. It furnishes analogies or pertinent inferential intimations in various forms that put the truth in stronger light and give it fresh attractiveness and impressiveness. Most of our didactic use of the Bible is literary in its character. It is for illustration rather than argument.

History is another source. History belongs to the general realm of human experience, and an appeal to it is one form of the appeal to experience, but it may well have distinct consideration. Historic facts greatly enrich a man's preaching. Biblical history is illustrative of wide-reaching ethico-religious principles. That so much of the old Testament is historical, or has a historic back-ground, explains why preaching of the right sort from it is so interesting. But secular history as well is of great value to the preacher. The historical sermon itself is of great interest and value. But the use of historic material for purposes of illustration

or of discussion or of argument in the development of any type of sermon is of equal interest and value. Preachers might well utilize more abundantly as material for illustration and exposition their reading and study of history.

The impression which Prof. Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," and which the skillful use by preachers of scientific facts, has made upon the religious public may well suggest the fruitfulness of the realm of the physical sciences for the work of preaching. The analogies which these sciences suggest may have an argumentative significance for the sphere of religion, and these facts are of great and varied illustrative worth. If preachers would avail themselves more fully of their knowledge of science, or would seek a fuller knowledge of it, in the interest of their work, they might make religion seem more real to men.

So-called secular literature is a much more common source for the material of preaching than was formerly the case. The best preachers of our day are familiar with it and use it with great freedom. Literature, and one might add art, are the flower of all best culture, and he who is familiar with them is in touch with what is best in his time. How greatly Robertson's acquaintance with Wordsworth and Tennyson, and with literature in general, English and other, and with the products of Christian art enriched his preaching! Dramatic and romantic literature are especially fruitful sources. Most of the notable preachers of our day are familiar with the classic Greek and English drama, and there are but few preachers of any grade that neglect the modern novel.

Experience, in the broader or in the closer sense, is one of the most common sources of appeal. It may be what we call the common experience, or the experience of particular men or one's own experience. It is a kind of appeal to facts,

or what is assumed to be facts. It involves an appeal to example or to concrete instances as illustrating a statement of fact or principle. The attractiveness, impressiveness and searchingness of the best type of modern preaching are conditioned by such appeal. Personal experience may furnish material for instructive as well as persuasive preaching. Wisely handled, and it needs most judicious use, it may become a valuable didactic source. Paul's personal experiences always had great weight with him in his proclamation of his Gentile Gospel, and they had corresponding weight with others. This is what makes the Corinthian, Galatian and Philippian letters so profoundly interesting and impressive. I wonder if we adequately understand how potent in the furtherance of Pauline Christianity the story of Paul's life and personal experiences was? We talk about the force of Paul's personality. We mean by it, or should if we speak understandingly, the power of his personal experiences. They are experiences that are made significant by the personal force of the man, but it was precisely these experiences that evoked the power that was in him. The experiences involved in his conversion were in fact the turning-point in the fortune of early Christianity. Personal experience was a most potent factor in the early, successful proclamation in general of the Gospel and it was the awakening of new personal religious experience, rather than its logical defenses, that saved the Christianity of the nineteenth century. The weight of the experience will of course, depend largely on the weight of the man, and the effectiveness of its use in preaching will depend on its importance and on what it illustrates. It must have weight in order to sanction its introduction into the pulpit. Otherwise it will degenerate into frivolity or cant, and this will always bring a reaction against it. It has doubtless been overworked in some quarters. But judiciously used

it will not fail of effectiveness. It is the weight of the man and the worth of what he has personally known and felt that will condition right use. It may be the experience of other men. We quote others' experiences because they interst us, and because we know that they will interest our hearers, because also they have an illustrative value. Stories may have an illustrative and so a didactic value. They are an appeal to fact as illustrative of principles. And this should fix their limits. An excess of story telling is like an excess in the use of figurative language. We lose sight of the thing illustrated and an impression of intellectual not to say moral weakness and frivolity is left with us. It may be an appeal to common or general experience. Christ appealed to man's judgments as based on common experience. The parables furnish such an appeal. Recall his appeal on the Sabbath question; which one of you does not in fact do the like of this very thing that I am now doing, only in a lower realm? It is an appeal to what we call common sense, observation and experience. It pre-supposes familiarity with life and knowledge of the ways of men. Preaching should deal copiously with actual life. Life furnishes the richest sort of material. A knowledge of men and of the world at large is in increasing demand. A study of human life as illustrative of the great truths and principles of religion lies behind the best preaching of our day and it is this largely that makes religion seem so much more natural and human. The study of dramatic literature as a portraiture of human life, has chief value just here for the pulpit.

2. The persuasive, or, more comprehensively, the practical development. The word practical suggests an effort to impress the conscience, and to secure action, rather than to secure a strong mental impression. And the word persuasion suggests an appeal predominately to the imagina-

tion, to the emotions, and to the moral and religious sentiments. A full discussion of the art and methods of persuasion is not called for just here. It is sufficient, in general, to say that all persuasive methods are based on the assumption and presuppose that the object is first of all apprehensible. It is, therefore, supplemental to the expository method, or assumes the work of interpretation as already adequately accomplished. But the thing that is apprehensible and adequately known must next be made to seem desirable. Persuasion is, therefore, an effort to make the truth attractive. But it cannot be made attractive unless it is seen and known to be available. To show that the object presented is within reach is an important element in persuasion. But the crown point in the process of presenting the apprehensibleness, the desirableness, and the availableness of the object, is the enforcement of personal obligation with respect to it. Hence it concentrates upon the conscience and will. But with respect to persuasive methods, the following suggestions are all that seem necessary.

(1) The didactic development may become persuasive and in the best sense practical by appropriate handling, and such handling presupposes an effort to interpret the truth with supreme reference to moral and religious interests. Instruction may be so combined with definite, direct, moral and religious inculcation that it may become persuasively and practically impressive. And this is the best type of instructive preaching. By the use of the forms of thought and speech that appeal to the imagination and the emotions one may so handle his expository matter as to reach persuasively the heart and the will of the hearer. All the expository methods, to which attention has been directed, may become in skillful hands, practically effective. A study of the didactic methods of popular and skillful preachers

like Henry Ward Beecher or Phillips Brooks, or Horace Bushnell, not to name more recent preachers, would enable one to get an insight into the secret of persuasive teaching. This is better than an abstract discussion of the problem. Here one would find concrete illustrations of just what one needs to cultivate. But such study would be of value only in connection with a proper culture of the imagination and sentiments and feelings, and by a personal vital appropriation of the truth as related to the practical needs of men. With such study all the sources of the didactic development above named, Scripture, history, science, literature, experience, as well as all the methods suggested, may become tributary to practical impression. A concrete handling of the material of thought from any source in skillful hands becomes cogent.

(2) More particularly an illustrative use of material becomes practically effective. The object of illustration is, indeed, to make the truth more intelligible, *i. e.*, as the word suggests, to throw light upon it. Hence all illustration may have didactic value. But it also aims at impressing the imagination. Some preachers seem to have a native gift for illustrative speech. But, after all, what we often call a gift may be the product rather of assiduous culture. This gift, although somewhat meagre, may be successfully trained. Many preachers, like Dr. Thomas Guthrie, have shown but little indication of the gift in early professional years.

(3) A pictorial style furthers a practical in so far as it is a persuasive and an attractive style of preaching. The ordinary pulpit language of many preachers, *e. g.*, like Henry Ward Beecher, or Dr. Joseph Parker, consists in word pictures. A study of Old Testament diction, or of poetry of any sort, becomes tributary to this style. An analytic study of figurative language would not be without value.

A mastery of grammatical, as well as verbal figures, may further a dramatic intensity of style. The cultivation of the descriptive style would make preaching more persuasive. Preachers of a graphic, dramatic style do much towards neutralizing the defects of a barren worship. The Bible abounds in material that is expressed in descriptive, pictorial form, that invites the study of the preacher.

(4) The use of anecdotes, proverbs and citations, enriches preaching and becomes conducive to impressiveness. Evangelists make abundant use of anecdotes. Luther dealt out proverbs from the pulpit with lavish hand, and advocated their use particularly in preaching to uninstructed people. They rivet attention and abide, and what they illustrate is thus more likely to abide with them. Quotation is, within limits, a valuable rhetorical device. The idea of authority is at the bottom of it. One adds weight to one's own thought or opinion or sentiment by quoting from those whose names are known and have weight in any department of knowledge or literature. It is an element of persuasion. To the weight or the impressiveness of the thought, or experience, is added the weight of the name. If the literary form of the citation is peculiarly impressive and pertinent it secures additional value. It has additional weight in the realm of sentiment and feeling.

Citations of poetry, which in a prose product are naturally somewhat restricted and which not infrequently would better be presented in paraphrase, have rhetorical value because of their poetic suggestiveness of thought, and impressiveness of artistic form, and may be made much more pertinent to the tone and sentiment of the sermon than prose citations. Brief fragments of poetic citation are preferable to long and continuous citation. Such may easily become tedious and in the end lessen rather than intensify impression. If one will have such a quotation it should

close the sermon. At the beginning or in the middle, it is very objectionable. But the shorter and the more pertinent the better.

II. Production of Material

Planning and producing may be quite or nearly simultaneous. Yet they may be to a large extent separable. After planning, producing and expanding are generally necessary. Men differ greatly in their productive power. Some generate thought with notable facility, but plan slowly and laboriously. Others plan more easily than they produce. The easy producer may easily run into disorder and superficiality. On the other hand the sketching of outlines may become a sort of knack. It is not at all difficult even for very superficial preachers to acquire facility in the planning of sermons. The outcome of such facility may be poverty of material. The sermon may be all skeleton. A proper regard for both substance and form is needed. Production, however, is much easier for any man, whatever his facility or lack of facility may be, in proportion as the preliminary work has been well done. If one gets hold of his theme and lets it get hold of him, lets it open itself out clearly before him, if he makes himself familiar with the road over which he is traveling, it should not take him long to make the journey. It should not in general be at the longest more than a three days' journey. But production of the right sort is no easy task for any man, however gifted. The problem of production is part of the larger problem of general education and culture, of training in professional experience and of the larger pedagogy of life. And this is far more than a homiletic problem. It can not, therefore, be satisfactorily treated merely as such. But there are considerations bearing upon this general question of training and upon the more specific problem of homiletic produc-

tion with which homiletics may deal. These considerations have a direct or indirect, an immediate or remote bearing upon the problem before us. Let us look at some of them.

1. I suggest first the need of a habit of mental concentration upon the actual work of sermon production. Such concentration, within the limits of a proper range in general culture, is necessary to effectiveness in production and expansion. No preacher should ever be careless about the specific task of sermon preparation. Without care and concentration, his work will lack definiteness of aim and the intensity, thoroughness and effectiveness that are conditioned by them. We need the mental and the moral discipline of what Emerson calls "the stated task," the lack of which in his own experience he lamented. A man who does not feel the pressure of professional duty may easily lose intellectual as well as moral stamina. A desultory habit of life is a fruitful source of frivolity, superficiality and mental and moral incompetency. The freedom of ministerial life from the stern exactions of stated hours of work endangers the preacher of falling into such a habit. It demands moral resolution to resist the danger. Every sermon should aim at a definite, strong, impression. It should represent, not only a general and comprehensive, but a specific homiletic aim. The preacher should do his best, within the given limits, in every sermon. That counsel may be given with all possible emphasis. The sermon should stand for a moral achievement, and it can not be moral achievement if it be not a respectable mental achievement. It is a wholesome thing for a man to grapple vigorously with a definite mental and moral task. "Invention" is the rhetorical term for production. It suggests that thought is a discovery. It suggests a mental search. Men differ, as already suggested, in their inventive and productive

powers, but no one produces without effort. Effort, however, is easier or more difficult according to the conditions under which the effort is made. Such favorable conditions as are possible should be secured. Let me venture to suggest some of them.

(1) Methods of work suited to one's need. No one can work freely and productively who works unnaturally. Effort will be unnatural that counterworks one's native tendencies and acquired habits. One must consider his habits as well as tendencies, for habit is second nature. Men naturally as well as habitually work in different ways. One man needs a good deal of time for preparation. He must work slowly and with deliberation or not effectively. Such a man should never permit himself to be pushed into a corner, if he can possibly prevent it. Concentration and continuity are necessary for most men. They are especially important for the man who must work slowly and deliberately. If the current of thought is interrupted, it is difficult to re-establish it. Such a one should not permit himself, without weighty reasons, to be drawn away from his work. One man works best with pen in hand, and in entire seclusion. It is an unfortunate necessity for any preacher that he should be obliged to work in that way. But some of our best preachers have been seemingly shut up to this method. Such a man should plan his work with reference to his necessities. Another man works vigorously while in contact with his fellow men in the parish or in the open world and in hours of exercise. It is a very desirable habit for a hard-pressed pastor, and such a one should make the most of that gift. In a word, then, every workman should find out his own best method of work, should find out just how he can work freely and productively, and effectively, and should adjust his work to his real needs. I say "real needs" for after all one may possibly train himself to work with

a fair measure of freedom under difficulties that at first might seem insurmountable. And it must be said that a minister's tasks are of such sort that he will be obliged to train himself to work under difficulties. But despite these limitations every man has his own personal needs. They are the result of constitution and temperament as well as habit. They should be respected. One can not work successfully under constant friction.

(2) Effort to be at one's best in hours of preparation. Perhaps no one is ever in just the same condition physically, mentally or emotionally on two different occasions. We are subject to variant moods. Little things affect us. It is surprising how little. We are more closely identified with the world in which we live and our moods are more dependent upon it than we suspect. These variant moods disclose their results in work for the pulpit. We detect them ourselves in different parts of the same sermon or in the sermon as a whole, and if we fail to detect them the watchful hearer does not. The preacher, it is evident, was not at his best, in the preparation of the entire sermon. The same text, theme, outline will yield a different product on two different occasions. The preacher is in a different condition productively. These variations of mood are measurably unavoidable. It is every man's problem to reduce their bad results to a minimum, and to do the best he can under existing conditions. They are partly under control. At any rate, one can take his mood into account. One should not force himself to work when at his worst. But one can do more and better than this. By good physical habits, proper habits of study and life in general, proper choice of hours of work and methods of work, one may keep one's self very nearly at one's best for hours of preparation.

(3) Thoroughness in the preliminary work. Without

this one will find himself obliged, in the work of preparation, to pause and make needed corrections in his scheme of thought. He may find it necessary to reflect further upon his text and theme and to retrace his ground for the purpose in fact of securing the mental guidance and quickening which he should have already secured. If the ground is thoroughly gone over at the outset the text and theme will constantly disclose their treasures through the medium of the plan. One will find that he has tapped a fountain that will flow in the right direction, for he has opened a channel for it. A free development presupposes such a channel. One can not over-estimate the value for free and fruitful production of a thorough previous study of the subject in its topical contents and relations. New treasures under such conditions will constantly come to view that otherwise would never have been suggested.

(4) A firm grasp of the proper definite object of the individual sermon. This conditions not only the pertinent quality of the development in general, but also facility of production in detail. Definiteness of aim may be urged for the sake of impulse in production. Every man who knows anything about preaching knows this. The glow of enthusiasm that is gendered by the stimulus of a definite, strong, earnest and loving purpose can not fail greatly to facilitate production. It is psychologically impossible that it should be otherwise. Moreover, and this is one of the most important practical considerations, the material of thought is readily suggested by the concrete, practical relations of the objects that fall within the compass of one's homiletic aim. The practical character of one's preaching is a condition of fruitful invention.

(5) The presence of the audience with the preacher during all the hours of preparation. This is necessary not only to the production of a sort of material that will be

adapted to the needs of one's hearers, and as incentive to the production of a vigor and directness that were otherwise impossible, but it will inevitably result in a general quickening of all the productive activities of the mind because they are inspired by the moral energies and the religious sympathies of the preacher. The ethical and spiritual conditions of "invention" are of even more importance than the intellectual, and this is the chief contribution that homiletics is likely to make to the subject.

2. I suggest secondly the need of broad and generous as well as close mental discipline and culture. In advocating concentration one should lay proportionate stress upon breadth. A general facility in the handling of one's faculties and the storing of mental resources condition facility and fertility in the specific work of sermon preparation. The end of all mental training is freedom in the handling of one's powers. Preaching becomes constantly easier in the process of close, clear, comprehensive and vigorous thinking. The problem of the individual sermon is the problem of one's general training. In the long run the preacher will fail without it. The sermon will always be what the man is. In this matter of professional training there are two extremes. One extreme would concentrate all effort upon the specific work of preaching, upon the individual sermon, at the expense of the general training of the man. The other would cultivate the man broadly and comprehensively at the expense of the preacher and the sermon. Both aims are necessary. Each tends to limit the extreme defects of the other. Either extreme is bad. This combination I shall discuss farther on. Just now let us consider some of the bad results of a narrow homiletic training. These results accentuate the demand for breath and range of culture. One bad result is poverty of mental resources. No profession calls for so liberal and com-

prehensive a culture as that of the preacher. Freshness and variety both in substance and form are impossible without vigor and fulness of mind. A man of narrow culture will run dry. In course of time he will have but little to say and that little will become monotonous. Men of genius have, indeed, without very close or broad training disclosed remarkable mental productiveness of a sort, and considerable variety of rhetorical form. But after all these men have managed in some way to get more training and to store larger mental resources than we might at first suppose. In their way they have been very diligent students. They have trained the gifts nature bestowed upon them with notable diligence, and made the most of themselves. This was the case with Mr. Spurgeon. It must be said also that these men, like the prophet in contact with the widow's cruse, have been able to make the resources of their relatively limited treasury go farther and yield more than the ordinary man could do. But among preachers of only average ability it is the scholarly man that has been most fertile, and this fertility has been the product of generous and vigorous training from early years. Some one says that the man who knows only one religion can not know that adequately. It is more apparent in our day than ever before that the man who in any line knows but one thing and is trained to do only one thing can not know that adequately or do it effectively. A mere pulpiteer can not be the best sort of preacher, for he is not the broadest, best-trained and most productive sort of man. Men of mental vigor feel the narrowing effect of a small range of professional studies and duties, and they seek to broaden themselves by contact with men and with the sources of culture outside their calling. Every profession has its mental as well as moral limitations. Hence the necessity of getting extra-professional points of view. This perhaps is preëminently the need of the ministerial

calling. It can not be specialistically exclusive and be successful in the largest and best sense.

Another bad result of narrow professional training is narrow sympathies. Broadmindedness is necessary to large-heartedness and both are necessary to fulness of mental life. It is true that a man may have a thoroughly trained mind whose heart is left empty and sterile. But it is impossible that such a man should have even the intellectual productiveness that a preacher needs. The best kind of mental training, while it broadens, enriches and stimulates the mind, proportionately enriches the heart. Out of such soil we get the best sort of fertility. The sermon should come out of a full mind and a full heart, and generous culture is necessary to both. A preacher should grapple with hard tasks. It is a condition of mental and moral manhood. A lazy minister is an anomaly and a disgrace to his profession. It is no wonder that Phillips Brooks denied that the time could ever come when a preacher, whose whole soul is in his work and who is constantly training himself in the great school of life, would have "nothing to say." The results of close and generous training are cumulative, and they appear in the afluence of one's preaching. One should not be satisfied unless he sees that the task of preaching becomes easier, and the quality of the product better. One who is always training himself, always adding to his stores of knowledge and experience, always increasing the facility of his mental action, always enriching the treasures of his heart, who has learned to think and is always thinking, has learned to love and is always loving, will always have something to say that is worth saying and worth hearing.

I have thus advocated the need of mental and moral concentration in the preacher's task and the proportionate need of mental range. It is bad to cultivate breadth at the expense of concentration and thus become unprofitable

in the ethical and spiritual quality of one's preaching. But it is just as bad to cultivate concentration at the expense of breadth and thus impoverish one's homiletic resources, "Ne quid nimis."

3. I suggest thirdly and in line with what has already been suggested, the need of cultivating what is familiarly known as the "homiletic mind." This involves a combination of range and concentration in one's mental and moral and religious activities. But it involves something more. It is more than generous, thorough, vigorous training in general. It is more than concentration upon the individual sermon, in particular. The effective preacher neither trains and cultivates himself without reference to his professional calling, nor does he train and cultivate himself with reference to his calling in a narrow and particularistic way. "The homiletic mind" is the mind that is trained, or that trains itself, to make all resources, the general as well as the specific, tributary to the work of preaching, or rather to the great object of all preaching, the winning and the building of men. The best preachers do not impoverish themselves by a too specific professional concentration, nor do they enrich themselves at the expense of their profession. The rather do they enrich their professional service by devoting all the wealth of their resources to it. Henry Ward Beecher was a most notable example of this habit of mind among modern preachers and indeed among all the preachers of the church in every age. No preacher of his day, none that this country has produced, few if any in any age, are to be compared with him in this capacity for accumulating vast stores of material from all departments of knowledge, ancient and modern, particularly modern, and for the accomplishment of this under the dominance of the didactic and ethical impulse to convert this material into homiletic pabulum and to concentrate it upon the work of preaching.

Few preachers were ever so lavish of material, and few ever wasted less. The noteworthy thing is not merely that he was a man of transcendent genius, that he had a surpassingly productive, assimilative and intensely active mind, all of which is true, but that preaching was with him the all-absorbing interest, the passion of his life. He saw and felt everything in its relation to its pulpit use, *i. e.*, to its ethical and religious significance and value. But to be more specific, what does the cultivation of the homiletic mind involve? Let us attempt a partial analysis of it. In addition to what has already been suggested in general, it involves the following particulars. First of all a large conception of the work of preaching. He who has such conception will see that it demands large resources to do the work of preaching successfully, and such a one will be stimulated to the acquisition of abundant resources in this interest. To such a one, nothing that can be converted into material for the pulpit will be insignificant. His motto will be; "I am a preacher, and I regard nothing that is convertible into pulpit pabulum as foreign to me."

And all this will involve a strong professional purpose in general. I mean a dominating purpose to make the service of one's professional life as effective as possible. Surely, no man who underestimates his profession, who treats the work of the ministry lightly or as if it were of secondary or subordinate importance will ever be alert to crowd everything into its service.

A compelling didactic impulse is essential, *i. e.*, an impulse to impart to others the truth as one sees it and feels it. No one can be a preacher at all, much less a productive preacher, without this. It is a necessary incentive in winning from all sources material wherewith to illustrate and enforce the truth one seeks to impart. The mere investigator is not a preacher. The preacher interprets

and imparts, and he investigates in order that he may interpret and impart.

Allied with this is the ethical impulse. This is not identical with the didactic impulse although the one is essential to the other for its full realization. Every man, every preacher especially, needs something to test the practical significance and worth of his knowledge. He above all other men needs an available practical knowledge in this "workaday" world. He has the needed test in his ethical purpose, or rather the needed motive to apply the test of the moral needs of men. He will always ask, What am I to do with my knowledge; what use can I make of it in the interest of my fellow men? What kind of knowledge will be of most avail? What am I to do with the fruits of my education and culture? The man who asks and answers these questions will be led to assimilate what is practically profitable and will crowd into the background all useless knowledge and all aimless culture. The field of knowledge in our day is so vast that no preacher can reasonably hope to attain to much distinction as a specialist or an authority in any branch of knowledge outside his own profession, and even here it must be limited. Even here he will be obliged to discriminate as to those branches of professional knowledge that are most important for him as a preacher or more broadly a minister. What he needs, therefore, is the purpose and the skill to win such knowledge and such culture as may be made most immediately and effectively available for the work of preaching, or rather of the ministry and this in order that his work may be the more profitable.

Alertness is, of course, a prominent trait of the homiletic mind, an alertness namely that is stimulated by mental, moral and emotional earnestness and that exercises the imagination freely in the work of winning suggestive material.

The habit of fixing material that may be made available for future pulpit use is one that finds its strongest motive in the culture of the homiletic mind. In these days of miscellaneous avocation that exacts upon the preacher, taxing his time and strength, some useful method of storing material is absolutely necessary. No busy preacher undertakes to get on without it. Dr. R. W. Dale has told us his method.* It is a very judicious method. Many of the helps of which preachers avail themselves are worse than useless. They are demoralizing. But any method that conserves the freedom and vitality of the preacher will be a boon to the modern hard-worked pulpiteer.

4. The importance of religious culture in the interest of production calls for specific mention. One's spiritual condition in the hours of preparation not only but as the habit of life may be more closely allied with mental productiveness than at first might be imagined. Its necessity for the right sort of productiveness is much more evident and is still more marked. Impoverished spiritual life means unprofitable preaching. It means devitalized preaching. Mental life is notably quickened, strengthened and enriched by the stimulus of the spiritual life. A man will grow mentally, as well as morally and spiritually, whose purpose is high and whose love for God and men is strong. Men not highly gifted mentally or rhetorically sometimes win distinguished success in the helpful presentation of the Gospel. The man with full heart and strong purpose, who also has diligence and good sense, will always be likely to have something worth while to say in the pulpit. Recall Luther's "Bene orasse est bene studuisse." He whose spiritual life is exalted will see the more clearly, and feel the more strongly and his purpose to bless men will be the more intense and his love and

* Yale Lectures. Lecture III and IV.

sympathy the deeper. The most helpful preaching is product of a devout frame of mind and the best type of it is impossible without spiritual elevation in the hours of preparation and delivery. The human soul is one. Mental life can not safely be divorced from spiritual life. If one would aim supremely at what is profitable in his preaching, let him cultivate his spiritual life. It has been justly said that the use of the Bible, as a basis for preaching, is no guarantee for the Christian quality of the sermon. It all depends on one's use of the Bible and this depends on the condition of one's spiritual life. As a merely external source it may be of no more value than the works of Plato. It is a deep experience of the power of the grace of God in Christ and the nurture of that grace that will secure the pulpit from an unprofitable intellectualism and moralism. Any divorce of spiritual from mental life will devitalize the pulpit. He who loves the truth, not merely for its own sake, but for the sake of its worth to one's fellowmen, will never degenerate into an unfruitful dogmatist, nor into an unfruitful rationalist and moralist.

5. The necessity of an intelligent and persistent habit of producing is evident. Every newcomer must win his own facility and must learn to produce in his own way. Right habit will win. It is constantly easier to do what one has tried to do well. The habit of writing should be perpetuated. It should be diligently cultivated especially in the early part of one's ministry. One would better write much, even though he may not carry his product in its written form into the pulpit.

6. Some consideration of the arrangement of material as it is produced with reference to rhetorical interests might well close our discussion of the development. In doing this, however, we should only traverse ground already pretty thoroughly covered in the discussion of the outline. The

only points that would need emphasis are those already discussed, *viz.;* unity, completeness, symmetry and progress in the process of unfolding. But the discussion of these points as related to the development would involve no new features. It may be worth while, however, to suggest that it would be well to pause at different stages of the development and raise the question whether the whole discussion as it proceeds is bound directly back to the theme and to the topics and whether it presses forward straight to its objective point and whether, therefore, the whole thing is bound together in unity, each part with every other and with the whole; whether the subject is being discussed with sufficient fulness at each stage, whether the parts are rhetorically proportionate, and symmetrical, and whether the sermon has a straight-line movement in all its parts on to the end. These questions do not answer themselves, nor can they be successfully answered without profit to preacher and hearer. They are not intrusive and need not disturb the inspirations of the sacred hours of preparation.

CHAPTER V

THE CONCLUSION

The conclusion corresponds to the introduction. Like the introduction, it takes into account the hearer's mental and emotional state. The problem of the one is to win interest for the discussion. The problem of the other is to utilize such interest after it has been won. It is in general not utilized to best advantage by a sudden break and a dead stop. The conclusion accentuates the practical significance of the sermon. It may disclose the moral earnestness of the preacher. The conclusion, of course, is not the only part of the sermon where the truth may be practically applied, but, as in the didactic sermon, it is generally the most appropriate place for most effective application. It interprets, therefore, the practical aim of the sermon. It has, like the introduction, an ethical value. It accentuates also the rhetorical completeness of the sermon. Without it the sermon would lack artistic unity. The conclusion is part of the organism of the sermon. Without it there is a lack. It is more than artistic incompleteness. An abrupt break in a discussion is likely to result in a certain mental as well as æsthetic dissatisfaction. It leaves the impression of mental incompleteness. It is an unfinished product. The more interested the hearer is, the greater the offense of a sudden break in which he parts company with the preacher. A conclusion may be rapid. It may even be sudden. Better so in general than a long-drawn conclusion. The best thing one may be able to do for an audience in exceptional cases is to part company with it suddenly. But an abrupt break that leaves the sub-

ject unfinished and the whole thing hanging in the air is another matter. In dramatic movement, we feel the shock of a premature conclusion the more intensely because it is a movement in action rather than in thought. The audience is wrought up to a high pitch of feeling and is suddenly dropped. If the plot is not properly ended, the artistic sense is offended. It rightly demands completeness. In this dramatic art represents ideal reality. But as regards the sermon the principle is the same. The conclusion, therefore, is more than a device for announcing to the audience that the preacher has reached the end of his discussion. It is a device for getting through in the proper way, *i. e.*, gracefully, if you please, or better, in such way as will satisfy mental and moral needs. Satisfaction for the artistic sense of unity and completeness is a relatively insignificant consideration in a moral product, like a sermon. But it may stand for something more important behind it. And here the æsthetic and artistic represent the ethical interest.

I. The Value of the Conclusion

From what has been said it may be inferred that in general the sermon, whatever its sort, may well have a somewhat well-defined conclusion as well as introduction. There would certainly be nothing gained from the artistic point of view in lopping the head and tail of a sermon, and just as little gained from the ethical point of view.

The value of the conclusion is first of all that it gives the subject discussed a new turn. It throws new light upon it and secures for it new impressiveness. It thus leaves a new idea of what the subject is capable of in the way of fruitful suggestion. This is of course eminently true of the inferential conclusion. But it is in a way true of all forms of conclusion.

It also carries the truth home with concentrated force. It

is the stroke that has behind it the compact energy of the whole sermon.

And it carries the final impression. There is nothing beyond it, to weaken the impression, or to neutralize or dissipate it. It is the preacher's last chance at his audience. Here the gist of the sermon or some most vital and seriously important suggestion from it is gathered up into a compact mass and thrown, as a last shot, so to say, at the audience. It is likely to go home. It certainly will if it be weighty in itself, because it is loaded with the cumulative force of the entire sermon. Last words stick, if they are what they ought to be. This is the reason why importance should be attached to them. The practical value of the conclusion may be suggested by some of the terms applied to it. The classical terms are for the most part without much significance. They are chiefly artistic terms suggesting merely the end of the discussion, *e. g.*, epilogue, peroration, conclusion. They may suggest, however, final impression, and so accentuate the practical interest of the discourse. The word "cumulus" however, as suggesting the crown-point of the discussion, may also convey the notion of gathering up the cumulative force of the speech and of applying it at the end. The two ideas of cumulative force and final impression were prevalent in classical oratory in its conception of the function of the peroration. The two chief forms were recapitulation, designed to clinch the mental impression of the address, and appeal, designed for final emotional impression. The conclusion by inference, which gives the subject discussed a new turn in the way of final application and for the purpose of fresh mental and ethical impression is chiefly characteristic of pulpit oratory. The terms used by Christian rhetoric to designate the work of conclusion suggests at once its practical character, *e. g.*, "improvement," "use," "application," and the terms that come through scholasticism from 2 Tim.

3:16, "instruction," "reproof," "correction," "admonition" and "encouragement." "Observation," "inference" and even "recapitulation" suggest also the gathering up of a subject or phases of it, with reference to practical use. Thus the conclusion makes the practical aim of the sermon the more apparent, and would make it the more decisively felt.

The sort, amount and method of the conclusion will, of course, depend on the sort of sermon. A didactic sermon will naturally have a conclusion corresponding to its character and aim. It will be fitted to help on its didactic purpose, *i. e.*, to leave as clear and strong an impression as possible of the weight and importance of the subject discussed. An ethical or evangelistic sermon will naturally have a conclusion of a more emotional and hortatory character. But it will be brief. The practical character of the sermon will have been apparent throughout and there will be the less need of extended practical application at the end. The need of formal and carefully-defined conclusion, therefore, is somewhat limited, limited, that is, by the character and aim of the sermon. There are two classes of sermons that have no special use for such a conclusion. There is the sermon in which the subject is continuously applied in the process of discussion, *e. g.*, the textual or expository or biographical or historical sermon. The truth in these types of sermons is not always continuously applied. In the biographical and historical sermon the application is sometimes separated from the discussion. On the whole, however, that would seem to be the better sort of textual, expository, biographical and historical sermon that applies the truth in the process of discussion. In fact it is rather difficult to secure an application at the end of such a sermon without injuring its unity. In the hortatory sermon only a brief word of conclusion is necessary, in general the briefer the better. A

quick moving and even abrupt conclusion may not be inappropriate in a sermon in which emotion runs high all through and that increases up to the end. Still a detached last word is always best. The topical sermon also, and especially one of the argumentative type in which the discussion forms a climax in which the interest is cumulative, may be less dependent on a distinct formal conclusion. The last topic of the discussion, which reaches the crown-point of the process, may often well constitute the point of attachment for the conclusion. A brief final word in line with the thought-impression of this last topic may be the most fitting and effective thing. To pause and turn the thought of the audience aside from this final impression by undertaking to gather up reflections into a conclusion from the subject as a whole might weaken the impression already produced. In general, however, the topical sermon of the didactic sort calls for a distinct conclusion based on the entire discussion. The value of an effective discussion is generally best secured by an independent application. In a weighty and absorbing discussion the hearer does not wish to be perpetually disturbed by the preacher's effort to apply what he is seeking to elucidate. If one is interested in a discussion he does not wish to stop to moralize. At the end, however, the intelligent listener is ready for the application and he expects it. In sermons with close-wrought unity, and rapid movement, vividly illustrated and expressed with emotional vigor, all necessity for pausing in the process for application is superseded. The application comes better at the end, where the whole subject may be used effectively. In fact the didactic topical sermon furnishes suggestions in the way of inference or deduction that can in general be secured only at the end, where the whole subject may be gathered up into a conclusion. And yet in many cases the last topic may be the best point of attachment for the conclusion. This must be left to

the ethical and rhetorical instincts of the preacher, and the character of his discussion will furnish his basis of judgment.

II. Qualities of the Conclusion

Such qualities as are here discussed are in the main applicable to every sort of conclusion, whether of a didactic or practical character.

1. Distinctness is first of all the mark of a good conclusion. Like the introduction it may well be slightly detached from the main body of the sermon. It is well if it be not undistinguishably entangled in the discussion, as it sometimes was in the preaching of Chalmers. Where the last topic of a cumulative discussion furnishes a basis for the conclusion, it is less likely to be detached, as we see not infrequently in the preaching of Chrysostom, of Robertson and of Chalmers. But it is not well that any discussion run without some pause, however slight, plump up to the end and stop abruptly. It is better to make it apparent that one is using the last topic as a basis for a conclusion, than to leave the impression that he is running the discussing full tilt up to the end. Not even a hortatory sermon should end thus. Better some slight pause, accompanied by some change of attitude, and some change in the tones of the voice to indicate that the preacher would approach his audience with his final word. Much of the preaching of our day undervalues the conclusion, frequently ignoring it, altogether, running the discussion straight to the end, making no practical use of the subject, not even applying it in the main body of the sermon. The latter part of the sermon often shows a falling off in mental and emotional vigor. There is a lack of cumulative power, of which the conclusion should avail itself. This is a serious defect. No great message can be effectively conveyed if the preacher flats out in anticlimax.

2. Applicableness is another quality. The conclusion

pre-supposes the end of the discussion. It is, therefore, the close of the whole sermon. The rhetorical terms "peroration" and "epilogue" seem to suggest this. The peroration is that which completes the entire speech. The epilogue is that which is added at the end of the discussion. This is true even of the conclusion that attaches itself to the last topic discussed. Thus the conclusion corresponds to the introduction. As the one does not anticipate, so the other does not end the discussion. Like the introduction, however, it has a very close thought-relation with the discussion. It takes up some aspect or aspects of the subject that have not appeared directly in the discussion, but are naturally suggested by it. It may be some aspect of the whole subject, in which case the thought unity of the sermon is the more adequately conserved. The whole discourse from beginning to end is thus bound together. The introduction has led up to the subject as a whole and the conclusion uses the subject as a whole. In the didactic discourse this is generally the case. And yet, as already suggested, the conclusion may take up the last point discussed. In this case the sermon should be so shaped that the most important topic, from the rhetorical point of view, should come last. Thus the teleological unity of the sermon is conserved.

3. Pertinence is an allied quality. This does not take care of itself. Ineptness is not an impossible homiletic sin, and it is quite as fatal to harmony in the conclusion as it is in the introduction. Better stop short than flat out. Better violence than inconsequence. Ineptitude suggests that the preacher does not keenly sense the import of what he has been saying or what he now says, or that he is weary of the discussion and doesn't care what he says next, so only he may make an end of the discussion, and says what happens to come into his head without reference to its pertinency. One should be at his best in bringing the sermon to a close.

In connection with this matter of pertinence two questions occur that are worth a moment's consideration.

The first relates to the use of contrast in the conclusion. The principle of harmony would on the face of it, seem to reject contrast. One would say that the conclusion should correspond in sentiment, feeling, tone, as well as thought, with the discussion. If the sermon is admonitory or severely ethical in tone the conclusion should correspond. It should not be parenetic or paracletic. It should carry through to the end the tone of ethical severity. If the sermon is evangelistically emotional, the conclusion should not be mentally reflective or didactic. In general this may be the correct view. And yet it is not safe to apply this as a regulative law. Contrast is often more effective than correspondence. In fact it may be in truest harmony with the final purpose of the sermon. It was Schleiermacher's opinion that no Christian sermon should ever end with a tone of judicial or ethical severity. Every sermon, whatever its character, should close with a tone of Christian hopefulness and joyfulness. This opinion can not perhaps be fully justified. But it is evident at once that it would often introduce the principle of contrast, and doubtless with good result. It is doubtless true that the note of hope and joy is eminently Christian and indeed often rhetorically most effective at the close of a sermon that has dealt searchingly with the heart and conscience. What is most Christian is likely to be most effective rhetorically. But Schleiermacher's principle is rhetorically inadmissible after all, for the principle of contrast may equally well demand that a sermon end with a tone of solemn admonition. A preacher's spirit should, of course, always be Christian. But ethical and rhetorical pertinence may be a safer guide than even Christian gentleness and graciousness in concluding a sermon that has spoken hopefully to the heart. It is often necessary

to leave the truth with the conscience, and the last word of warning may be most pertinent to the moral purpose of the sermon as well as most powerful, and no rule of Christian sentiment should displace it. The contrast between grace and severity may be as effective as that between severity and grace. It is well to set hope in contrast with admonition. But it may be equally well to set admonition over against hope. Contrast here may be more effective than correspondence. Much depends on the concrete conditions of the case.

The second question relates to the use of prayer in the conclusion. It may be even more impressive and pertinent than in the introduction. From sermons of a prevailingly didactic character, in which no very strong ethical or emotional impression is sought or made, it is naturally excluded. But the emotional sermon that seeks and secures strong ethical and religious impression and that is cumulative in emotional power may well end in prayer. It is very natural in such a sermon to pass into a brief utterance of adoration, or ascription, or petition. It may harmonize well with the whole tone of the sermon. It may fall into line with the character and design of worship. There is a closer connection between some types of preaching and worship, and more specifically prayer, than may be apparent. To the oriental it is more apparent than to the occidental mind. We find this in the preaching of the New Testament. The English preachers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were accustomed to close their sermons with an ascription to the Trinity. It was a matter of form and often lacked pertinence, but it accentuated the close connection between preaching and prayer. German preachers, who in general hold the sermon closer to worship than American preachers do, often close, as they open, with prayer. Dr. Horace Bushnell closes his sermon "Putting on Christ" with

the words, "Cover us in it" (*i. e.*, thy righteousness), "O thou Christ of God and let our shame be hid eternally in Thee." Cardinal Newman sometimes did this with exquisite taste and with intense earnestness, interjecting prayer into the midst of the sermon as well as at the close. The tone of the sermon should, of course, be exalted to sanction it. It may be noted finally that closing with the words of the text is a pertinent device. Dr. Joseph Parker and Mr. Spurgeon often do this. The most appropriate thing one can do sometimes is to close with the same remark with which the sermon opened, this binding the beginning and the end together.

4. Conciseness is one of the qualities of a good conclusion. It can afford to be concise because it is based on the cumulative results of the discussion. This is true especially of the sermon that is emotionally strong and that moves rapidly to a climax. A compact, sententious conclusion is the most fitting sort of conclusion for an audience that is already aroused emotionally. Even an abrupt conclusion may be most fitting. It depends, of course, on the sort of sermon and the effect already produced. The reflective or inferential conclusion that ends a didactic discussion is naturally longer and more deliberate than a conclusion by appeal. But compactness and brevity are the rule. Dr. Bushnell, after some of his most vigorous discussions, discloses the conviction that he has said enough, and that there would be a loss of power in an extended conclusion, adding as his nearly last word: "We need no conclusion." It is noteworthy, however, that even after this he rounds out the sermon with a distinct conclusion, brief though it be. Bushnell's preaching shows that the topical sermon, which calls for an inferential application of the subject, has naturally a longer conclusion than the textual sermon. Conciseness in the conclusion is in harmony with the tastes of our time.

The long-drawn five-fold conclusion of the scholastic sermon was appropriate to the character of that type of preaching. It was a method of securing practical application, which was almost wholly lacking in the main body of the sermon. The brief, simple conclusion of our day is in harmony with the character of its preaching.

III. Methods of the Conclusion

All methods may be grouped under two classes, the didactic and the impressional. One speaks prevailingly to the mind, the other to the emotions. In classical oratory the deliberative and judicial types of address attached importance to the didactic conclusion, *i. e.*, it sought first of all to clinch and perpetuate the mental impression of the speech. The epideictic type of address affected especially the emotional or impressional conclusion. After recapitulation, which may be called the didactic conclusion, there was also added to the deliberative and judicial address an emotional appeal. The character of the question, of the discussion and of the audience would determine the character and extent of the appeal. In general the emotional conclusion had a prominent place, however, in classical oratory, for its task was to arouse to action a populace that was dependent on oratorical excitement. The character of the conclusion somewhat strikingly suggests the difference between ancient and modern and especially classical and Christian oratory. The didactic conclusion perhaps may be called one of the distinguishing marks of Christian oratory. It does not appeal primarily to the emotions or passions of men but to thought and reflection and to emotion and will as influenced by intelligence. Different types of Christian discourse are also distinguished by the character of the conclusion. The writer agrees with Dr. Dawson that from the modern sermon, and especially the American sermon the note of appeal has too

largely vanished. But it is still true that the didactic conclusion will always be characteristic of the pastoral sermon, while the emotional conclusion or conclusion by appeal will always be characteristic of the evangelistic sermon.

But let us look at some of the most common methods of conclusion and at their adaptations.

1. Recapitulation, which is the summary of topics, or resumé, which is a fuller summary of the contents of the sermon, is properly a part of the discussion rather than of the conclusion. In fact it rarely ever concludes a sermon. Something is generally added after it. Thus in the classic oration. The conclusion was less than the peroration. It was the end of it, and followed the recapitulation, making use of it as a basis for appeal. The recapitulation, however, was regarded as a part of the peroration, rather than of the main body of the discussion. In homiletics it is generally treated as a form or method of conclusion, and we will so regard it. It may be easily detached from the discussion and thrown across into the conclusion, as a preparation for practical application. In two classes of sermons recapitulation is especially desirable.

First in sermons without clearly-differentiated topics or formal divisions, like those of Dr. Chalmers, Canon Mozley and Cardinal Newman. Many at least of the discourses of these great preachers would be of greater value even to the reader with a brief resumé of contents or recapitulation of topics. If one does not care to obtrude his outline he is beholden at least to the average hearer to make a summary of his topics. There are, of course, sermons that need no recapitulation, those for example, that are, like many of Newman's, dependent upon rhetorical impression rather than upon elaborate discussion, for their effectiveness. But sermons without clear outline that discuss important themes demand recapitulation as really as the old classic deliberative

or judicial oration demanded it. Lawyers often express surprise that preachers do not recapitulate more. A preacher should surely be as intent upon carrying his case as a lawyer, although the case to be carried and one's idea of carrying it may be very different. What the lawyer means by carrying his case is that he must get it so effectively before the jury that he will carry them. Recapitulation aids him in doing this. And what less can or should a preacher mean by carrying his case than to put his subject before his hearers just as effectively as possible with reference to the accomplishment of a moral and religious result? The aim is to bring the hearer into subjection to the power of truth. If recapitulation will aid one in getting his subject more effectively before the hearer with reference to this result, as it often will, why should he not recapitulate as the skilful lawyer does? Of course there must be something to recapitulate. It presupposes a discussion, although not necessarily of an elaborate sort. We do not recapitulate the utterances of sentiment and emotion that are dependent on first impression and can not be reproduced by any recapitulatory process.

The doctrinal, the argumentative or didactic discourse of the weightier sort calls for recapitulation. If we were to limit recapitulation to the doctrinal or argumentative type of sermon, the pulpit would doubtless get on without it. But all weighty-didactic discussion needs it. By the use of it such discussion may thereby secure even a certain sort of rhetorical cogency. To grip the truth and to condense it into compact form is of itself an element of force, and a habit of doing this may even become tributary to a more forceful method of discussion.

2. Remark, observation or reflection. These terms all have reference to the more practical use of the subject discussed which the conclusion calls for. A remark is a brief

practical suggestion based on some aspect of the subject in hand. An observation is a somewhat more extended and carefully-considered suggestion based on what one observes or discovers of the practical bearings of the subject in discussion. One pauses at the end and looks at the subject from a new point of view in order to see what he may find there that is practically useful in the way of suggestion. A reflection means about the same thing. It is a suggestion that comes as a result of turning the subject back upon the familiar observations, experiences and thought-habits of life. The observation is a species of inference, for it comes from the subject or from some phase of it in an inferential way. But it is appropriate to the simpler class of subjects or to the simpler class of discussions. It is particularly appropriate to the biographical or historical sermon. It comes in the form of practical application on suggestion. It aims, not so much to magnify the subject to the intelligence of the hearer, with reference to educative results by increase of knowledge, as to make a practical impression upon the heart and conscience and so upon the life of the hearer. Prof. George Shepards' sermon, "Saul, the Regressive in Piety" illustrates this. It closes with two observations, reflections or practical lessons: (1) We should be afraid of the beginnings of sin; (2) the faults that wreck men are the hidden, not the obtrusive ones. The sermon "The Giver of the Two Mites" also illustrates: (1) The heart quality in giving is the chief thing. We are responsible for this. (2) The amount of good done is determined by this. (3) We are in little danger of giving too much. These are indeed inferences, but of the simple, practical sort and are designed to perpetuate ethical rather than mental impression.

3. Inference. An inference is a remark that is based *not* on a direct but indirect contemplation of a subject, *i. e.*, on some sort of logical deduction. It is a judgment based on

the logical relations of thought in the subject. It is adapted to the didactic sermon of the more weighty sort. It addresses primarily the reflective faculties. It is a mental and moral judgment based on the thought-relations of the discussion. As if the preacher would say: Granting that what I have said in this discussion be true, you can see for yourselves that the following inferential judgments or suggestive teachings must also be true; in view of all that has been said, you can see as follows! But although speaking to the hearers' judgment, it may be one of the most effective ways of reaching the convictions and emotions. It may bring the subject home with great power. It puts one in a dilemma: You approve of what I have said? You are convinced and will not deny it? Well, then, this rational, this logical and very practical conclusion follows from it, and you cannot evade the import of it. Inference, therefore, may be used with great practical effect. Its power lies partly in the fact that it brings the truth to bear upon the hearer indirectly. It gets at him by getting around him. Take as an example the conclusion of Dr. Bushnell's sermon, "Christ Waiting to Find Room." Note the inferences: (1) From the basis of the discussion we see inferentially why Christianity is not respected. "Our Gospel fails because we so poorly represent the worth and largeness of it." (2) We see why there is so much polemical theology. "The true hospitality is that of the heart, not of the head, etc. If only the great heart-world of the race were set upon to full entertainment of Jesus, there would be what a chiming of peace and unity in the common love." (3) We see why Christianity makes so little head. No room for him in our zeal. "Why does Christianity make such slow progress? I answer Christ gets no room, as yet, to work and to be the fire in men's hearts he is able to be." (4) We see why we should grieve over the patience he is obliged to exercise

towards us. "But what most of all grieves me is that Christ himself has so great wrong to endure in the slowness and low faith of so many ages." (5) We see why we should hasten to make room for him. "All the sooner, brethren, ought we to come to the heart so long and patiently grieving for us." A most weighty conclusion not only in the realm of judgment but in the realm of feeling and conviction as well. Note the cumulative arrangement of the inferences, ending with the most practical and personal. They come with strong logical and ethical conclusiveness. We can not escape this impression of conclusiveness.

Professor Shedd has directed the attention to the value of the inference in the discussion of subjects whose importance lies not wholly in themselves but in the truths that flow from them.* That is, the power of the inferential conclusion is best realized in the use of themes that naturally furnish weighty and impressive logical conclusions and suggestions. Its force depends on its close, logical, necessary connection with the primary truth. The force of comparison lies in the fact that it sets truths in their analogous relations, *i. e.*, relations of likeness of principle. The power of contrast lies in so setting the objects of thought over against one another that we the more readily detect the relations of truth and error. The power of inference or deduction is in the fact that it sets truth in its logical and necessary relations, *i. e.*, in its relations of cause and effect or of antecedent and consequent. It gives one an impression of the logical, gripping power of the truth. It is the more effective that it comes with rhetorical force upon the emotions as well as with logical force upon the understanding. Note two more of Dr. Bushnell's inferential conclusions, *e. g.*, "Salvation by man."† Christ saves us by getting into and abiding in corporate

* Homiletics, page 198.
† "Christ and his Salvation." XIII. page 271.

relations with the race. This is the thought of the sermon. Inferences: (1) We see that there is a power of perpetual self-renewal in the race. (2) Responsibility of Christ's disciples. The world is saved through the Church. (3) Encouragement to patience. The world must be saved slowly. (4) God's delicacy in providing salvation not only *for* us but *by* us. "The Insight of Love." * The value of insight above that of dialectic or casuistry in dealing with religious subjects is the thought. Inferences: (1) Insight is needed in order to understand Christ. (2) In settling the perplexities of the Christian life. (3) It is an impelling power as contrasted with selfish prudence. (4) It is a characteristic of heavenly society. Note here the great range and variety of truths wrapped up in the primary truth discussed and thus brought out. All this greatly enriches preaching. Without these inferential processes one would fail to see the scope and the suggestiveness of the primary truth. And this process is a most effective way of reaching the heart and conscience as well, especially of the thoughtful hearer.

Two qualities are essential to effective inference. (1) The logical element of pertinence. A deduction should come naturally. It should be near at hand, not strained, remote, far-fetched, nor yet so near at hand as to be too obvious and thus commonplace. It should readily and naturally furnish a new aspect of the subject, *i. e.*, a somewhat more direct and practical, although subordinate aspect than the discussion has furnished, and yet it should not be so obvious as to be platitudinous. (2) The rhetorical element of brevity and conciseness. The multiplication and prolix elaboration of inferences are not in harmony with the mental habits and tastes of our time. There are many things that might be deduced inferentially from the theme that may not be in harmony with the aim of the sermon or with its limits. The

* "Christ and his Salvation." III. page 51.

topics that are deduced should be presented suggestively rather than expansively and exhaustively.

4. Exhortation or appeal. Recapitulation, observation, inference seek the will largely through the mind. Exhortation includes all direct appeal to the feelings and to the conscience, reaching the practical activities through the emotions and moral convictions rather than through the reflective faculties. Inference and other forms of the didactic conclusion perpetuate the mental appeal, and leave conscience and will to appropriate the result. Exhortation assumes the work for intelligence as already done, and moves on with its assumed mental result directly upon the emotional and moral sphere. Most people are somewhat dependent upon appeal that stirs emotion. In fact everybody is measurably dependent on it, although a sort of appeal that reaches one man may not reach another. Certain types of emotion are discredited in our day. Intelligent people discount all emotion that is not based on or associated with sane thinking. It is charged that the pulpit of our day has measurably lost the power of appeal. And it is a fact that there is but relatively little hortatory preaching. One reason is doubtless that hortation has been overdone. Another reason is, however, that the intellectual element in religion has been over-accentuated. And another still is that we lay more stress upon action than upon emotion in the religious life. We see this measurably in modern evangelistic methods. Thomas Carlyle, the great apostle of action, whose influence on this line in the last century was very great, has, in his semi-jocose, grotesque fashion, recorded his idea of practical preaching as follows: "If I were a preacher," he says, "I would tell the people on Sunday what to do, and then when they came back next Sunday I would ask them, well, have you done that? How much of it have you done? None? Then go home and do it." If

this were to be taken seriously, as of course it is not, although it is the Carlylean method of accentuating the Gospel of work, we should have to regard it as pure charlatanism. If the man who uttered it expected his prescription to be taken seriously, he would show himself to be neither a philosopher nor an orator. It disregards the necessity of recognizing the principles of duty as distinguished from mere prescriptions of duty. A man must appropriate the principle before he is likely intelligently to heed the prescription. It ignores also the dependence of action on aroused conviction and of conviction on aroused emotion. It is not the preacher's primal task to present the rules of duty in detail, but to present and enforce the principles of duty and to stimulate to action by stirring conviction and emotion. Much that might be said about the hortatory conclusion were better said in a discussion of the hortatory type of preaching in general. But a few considerations are especially pertinent to the conclusion.

(1) The most effective hortation rests upon a didactic basis. Successful appeal presupposes a solid foundation. Strong, well-directed, rational emotion, the only kind that it is desirable to excite in a worshipping or in fact in any other kind of assembly, cannot be secured without solid ground in intelligence. A mental movement that increases in strength is desirable. Neither preacher nor hearer is ready for effective exhortation without suitable mental preparation. We are disgusted with perfervid explosions that seem to have no basis. We look with amazement and distrust upon a man who has no rational justification for his heat and sweat. It is unfortunate that what is called "pulpit emotion" should be regarded as synonymous with unintelligence and unreality. A worked-up emotion is a most undesirable product because it is irrational and unethical.

(2) Definiteness and pertinence are essential in all effec-

tive appeal. A direct appeal presupposes the direct application of some particular moral truth or some specific phase of it. The previous discussion must lay the foundation for it. Exhortation on the basis of generality is wholly inconsequential. Something specific is presupposed with respect to which the appeal is made. What is specific is direct and what is direct is forceful. A generalized hortation has no mark and no shot.

(3) Reality is the primal moral virtue of exhortation. Appeal that is intelligent, pertinent, direct and specific will be natural, and as natural real. No exhortation will ever be effective that does not rest upon a psychological and ethical basis. Mere intellectual enthusiasm, product of cumulative mental excitation and interest in the subject discussed is not enough, although this is presupposed and is of primal importance. But there must be a genuine love of the truth as working truth and a genuine love for men as well. Otherwise we shall have only a species of professional hortation. It is a genuine moral devotion to the truth, truth as a personal moral interest and loving devotion to the welfare of men that are necessary to save preaching from professionalism.

(4) Concentration is essential to cogent appeal. If it be direct and specific it is the more likely to be concentrated. All conclusion may well be compact and succinct. Under normal conditions it will be. The sentences are likely to be shorter and more abrupt. We crowd more into them. Note the last sentences of Robertson's sermons. The structure of the sentences, the vocabulary, the figures of speech are more intense than in other parts of the sermon. Especially condensed should be the conclusion by appeal. It is natural that it should be and naturalness is what we want, for naturalness is reality. A few terse sentences dropped like red-hot coals into the mind and heart may effect amazing

results. Sometimes the most impressive thing possible is a final repetition of the text, especially if it be in itself impressive, and if it comes laden with the cumulative impressions of the discussion. If a sermon does justice to an impressive text it will come back upon the hearer with tenfold power at the end. Sometimes a brief snatch of poetry, a line of some hymn full of deep religious feeling, a passage of Scripture cognate with the text, a short utterance of hope or of foreboding, a brief appeal to action, a short utterance of prayer, an ejaculation, an apostrophe,—all this if the ground be well laid may sweep the hearer up quite to the gate of heaven. But whatever it be, its effectiveness will depend on its brevity and concentration. If the sermon has already done its needed work, the last thirty seconds will be laden with the cumulative energy of the previous thirty minutes.

CHAPTER VI

THE RHETORICAL FORM

STRUCTURAL form is confessedly our chief interest in the discussion of methods of homiletic art. But formal homiletics legitimately includes questions of rhetorical and oratorical expression. The latter receives but little, doubtless too little, attention in our day. But it is best taught in the class-room by modern experts in the art of expression and a collation of oratorical commonplaces by one who knows but little about the subject would be of small value to our discussion. The study of rhetorical form also was formerly regarded as of more importance than it is now. The reasons are many. The study of language does not hold the place it once held in our educational processes. In the widening of the field of knowledge the pressure of other departments has made itself felt in the sphere of linguistics. The physical sciences have asserted their claims and now the so-called social sciences are at the front. There is less time for rhetorical studies and less importance is naturally attached to them. Men are after what they regard as more practical branches of knowledge. What to say is of more importance than how to say it. The study of ancient and foreign languages has largely displaced the study of our own, and even in the recent revival of the study of English in our fitting schools and colleges the literary interest in the comprehensive sense dominates the more specific rhetorical interest. It may be questioned whether educated men write and speak English as well as educated men a hundred or even fifty years ago.

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The newspaper press has had its influence. Thought reaches us more fully through the eye than through the ear, and what addresses the eye is differently expressed from that which addresses the ear. He who writes without reference to speaking, like a newspaper reporter or editor, may easily fall into negligent habits in his use of language. There is doubtless an improvement in newspaper English but in general it is very poor English. We see the results in pulpit-speech. What the preacher says is the chief thing of importance. There is even a prejudice against the discussion of pulpit style. There is a reaction against rhetorical standards, and the whole subject of rhetorical form falls into neglect, as if it were no matter how a man says his say if only he have something to say. Somehow it will manage to say itself. The pulpit has generally been in conflict with so-called secular rhetoric and oratory. Its history shows a singular succession or series of approximations towards and of revulsions from the secular standards. Questions of matter and tone are, of course, always of supreme importance. Sincerity and reality are the cardinal virtues of the man who speaks for Christ. But preaching that minimizes the value of literary form can never be the best type of preaching. The pulpit can not emancipate itself from the laws of human speech as it can not from the laws of human thought and feeling. Preaching is speech of the highest and noblest type. It should be worthy of itself. Let us therefore consider this question a little more fully.

I. The Claims of Rhetorical Culture

1. The relation of thought to speech accentuates the importance of rhetorical culture. The closeness of connection necessitates the culture of form in the interest of substance, as well as of the culture of substance in the interest

of form. What one says has intimate connection with the manner in which he says it. Ratio and oratio are two sides of the same thing. One suggests substance, the other form, but they are organically one. The science of language is one phase of the science of thought. Max Müller, the philologian, wrote a work on the science of thought from the philological point of view, and John Locke, the philosopher, found it necessary in dealing with thought to consider its relation to language. He says,* "I find that there is so close a connection between ideas and words, and our abstract ideas and general words, have so constant a relation one to another, that it is impossible to speak clearly and distinctly of our knowledge, which all consists in propositions, without considering first, the nature, use and significance of language." "Style" at first meant a man's pen-stylus. Then it came to mean penmanship, chirography or manner of writing with a pen. A close connection is etymologically suggested here. Pen-man-ship. Pen, the instrument used. Man, the agent using it. Ship, shape, form or method in which the pen is used, as disclosed by the product of use. Penmanship is the method in which a man uses the pen. Here is a basis for the notion, often doubtless over-stated, that a man discloses his personal peculiarities in his handwriting. But at last the word style naturally comes to mean the way in which a man expresses himself in language. The close connection between the man and his method of expression is thus taken up into this higher meaning. We have no longer a merely physiological and relatively mechanical connection between the man and his pen, but a psychological and even ethical connection between the man and his speech. Style, therefore, is more than a manner of expression. It is a mental, moral, emotional, æsthetic product, formulated, incorporated in language. In the Hebrew language a man's

* Essay on the Human Understanding. Book III, Chap. 37.

name stands for the man himself. It is etymologically the "sign" of what is in the man. The close connection between the man and the manifold forms of his self-manifestation, among them his speech, lies at the basis of this word. The Latin word "fatum" suggests this connection. The word spoken is the fixed sign of the unalterable force behind of which the word spoken is an embodiment. The Greek word ῥῆμα means both speech and the thing spoken. The word and the matter of the word are identified. *Think* and *thing* are perhaps allied in significance. To think is to thing. To think something is to do something. The product of mental activity is the form in which the thought embodies itself. The form is the thing thought as embodied in the word uttered. The word is that in which the reality of the thought is actualized. So then, we think ourselves out into words and thus come to think in words. Limitation as to capacity for expression in language involves limitation as to capacity for thought. Absolute incapacity for speech, or for some form of expression that is a measurable substitute for it, would involve a corresponding incapacity for definite thought. Mr. George P. Marsh reminds us somewhere in his Lectures on the English Language that we remember our thoughts more definitely than our sensations and emotions for the reason that the former secure greater distinctness in consciousness and so leave a stronger impression upon us because of their connection with a definite form of words. For the same reason perhaps our uttered words, whether vocalized or written, are more distinctly recalled than our unuttered words. It is said of Louis Napoleon that he always wrote out on a slip of paper the object of thought he wished to be sure of remembering, then read it over and tore up the slip. This invariably fixed the thing in his mind. Possibly too it is for something the same reason that our acts stand out more definitely as objects of thought and are

more readily recalled than the unformulated thoughts, feelings, convictions and purposes that lie behind them. The act objectifies what lies subjectively behind it. It puts it into form. And it may be that for this reason in part the outward act has a more powerful influence on character than the unacted thought or purpose behind it. Some men, perhaps most men, more readily commit to memory their uttered or written thoughts than those that are unuttered or unwritten. The contents of a manuscript that have been orally uttered in the process of writing are more readily retained in the memory than they would be if unvocalized. It is for this reason that memoriter preachers vocalize their sentences in the process of composition. The connection between thought and speech is most intimate and vital in the first moments of production. It may require positive effort and perhaps changed conditions to reproduce subsequently the same close connection. This is one reason why it is difficult to repeat an old sermon successfully. It demands some change in the manuscript or a new congregation in order to reproduce the first impression. The reason why Whitefield could preach his old sermons with undiminished effectiveness was that he always had a new audience and by the power of feeling and imagination was able to re-wed thought to the words uttered. We see the principle illustrated in our confessions of faith. The reason why the old creeds fail to affect us is that the words have no longer vital connection with our religious thoughts, feelings and convictions. We must have new confessions in order to hold the connection between thought and words. The value of feeling and imagination in vitalizing the relation between thought and speech is illustrated by the successful evangelistic preacher. Here in part is the power of poetic utterance. Thought here secures a more vital connection with speech through the energizing power of feeling and imagination. The

reason why an eye-witness is better than an ear-witness is that by the stir of feeling and imagination he is able to reproduce what he has seen in more vivid language. He is able to vitalize the relation of thought and speech. Here in part is the secret of dramatic power. The actor not only reproduces inwardly an imagined state of mind and feeling, but he makes them real and effective by an utterance corresponding. He effects so close a unification of thought, feeling and speech that he can talk as well as think and feel like another person.

The cultivation of rhetorical form, then, is largely the cultivation of what lies back of it and is vital to it. This is significant for the culture of what may be called a pulpit style. Such a style will have certain peculiarities of its own. This point will reappear further on. The point just here is that the importance of the culture of rhetorical form for the pulpit is the importance of what lies back of it. It is easy to lose sight of this close connection between substance and form. This may in part account for the relative neglect of questions of rhetorical form in preaching. If substance and form may be treated as if they were independent of each other, it is no wonder that substance should be valued at the expense of form. It is indeed a creditable thing that an educated man should not be willing to become a literary pedant. For literary pedantry consists in disproportionate attention to form as such and in treating it in a merely analytical and external manner. We save the literary product and the literary man, we elevate the whole tone of any species of literature or form of utterance, we rescue it from pedantry on the one side, and on the other side we rescue the preacher from a supercilious contempt of questions of rhetorical form, by reëmphasis of the very familiar but much-ignored fact that substance and form are inseparable. The study of literary form becomes, thus, one of the most

interesting and valuable studies in which a scholar can engage. But it is to be borne in mind that one does not become an effective preacher simply by cultivating his intelligence, imagination, feelings and moral and religious life. One may be a good thinker, a good theologian, and a well-trained man in general and yet be a poor preacher. One may be a very pious and devout and enthusiastic man and yet be a poor minister of religion. One must study literary form as such. In fact one who trains himself in the art of expression may strengthen his capacity for exact thinking by the very processes of his training. Emerson early formed the habit of examining his thoughts with reference to their expression. This involved the counter-process of examining his expression with reference to his thoughts. Expression was an important interest in all his culture. "It is not knowledge we need," he said, "but vent." His thought was conditioned by the form it was to take. His habit of reflection was conditioned by his habit of deliberate expression. A man's style does not take care of itself. It must be trained, and as it is trained it will affect what lies behind it and must be transmitted by it. The good stylist will always have the advantage of the man who fails in this respect, although the latter may be superior in his native endowments. It is not substance alone that makes a classic. The classic is of chief value not for its matter of thought but for its perfection of form. The best classics with all their seeming of spontaneity and freedom are the product of long and laborious elaboration. Good form does not always presuppose the weightiest and most original substance of thought, although proper attention to form will surely influence the quality of thought, and it is certainly true that bad form indicates defective mental work. Inexact and obscure speech always involves defective mental discrimination.

2. This leads to the suggestion that the preacher's responsibility as a public teacher accentuates the claims of rhetorical culture. No one can teach correctly who uses languages incorrectly. We see the need of it in the legal profession. No lawyer can succeed who does not express himself in clear, accurate, forcible language. We see the need in our legislative assemblies. They are composed largely of half-educated men, who have no mastery of the English language. Much legislation exhibits gross ignorance not only of facts and principles but of language. It is generally the trained lawyer of our legislative bodies that saves them from the disgrace of crude legislation. It would be well if all legislation were submitted for final revision to a committee of linguistic experts, as the Constitution of the United States was submitted. We need a more thorough study of the English language, not merely of English literature, in all our public schools. No nation can remain a worthy representative of civilization whose public leaders are ignorant of their mother tongue. The degeneracy of our public men in this, as in other respects, is bodeful. Pulpit-speech is not technical, but the teaching of the pulpit demands not only careful thinking but careful statement. The correctness of a man's teaching depends on his use of language. The truth the preacher presents is important. It exacts closely upon the medium of its transmission. On moral as well as æsthetic grounds the form should answer to the quality of thought. There are certain qualities of speech that are eminently appropriate to the pulpit. At an early period in the history of the Christian pulpit, the special demands of Christian truth upon its form of presentation were recognized. Augustine's discussion* was based on solid rhetorical principles and is not without value today. The worthier one's conception of the importance of Christian

* De Doctrina Christiana, part IV.

truth the worthier his conception of its form will be. The object of Christian preaching also accentuates the significance of form. It is the production of character and the regulation of conduct by the presentation of truth to the heart and conscience as well as to the mind. Other speakers deal with relatively transient results. The preacher deals with results that are permanent and he is responsible with respect to the instruments that are fitted to produce these results. By his words shall he be justified and by his words shall he be condemned. It is "the King's English" that is committed to him. Surely no man who worthily represents the sanctities of human speech may "murder" or abuse or degrade "the King's English." People have a right to demand that the man who speaks to them on the weighty matters of religion shall speak worthily, and in such a way that they will correctly understand and feel the force of the truth. The reason why some men not thoroughly educated speak with great power not only to the so-called common people but to people of the best culture, is that they have learned, and never unlearned, to speak the English language in a clear, idiomatic, simple and forceful manner. Abraham Lincoln in political life and Mr. Spurgeon in ministerial life are notable examples. Such men as John Bunyan show what can be done with the English language. Greek and Roman orators knew the love of the people for their native tongue and they cultivated it with enthusiasm. Preachers might well take a lesson from them. If one would win the hearts of the people he must know something of the magic of their language. A simple, clear, idiomatic, pithy type of English would greatly strengthen the pulpit. Increase in the extemporaneous method of preaching may result in undervaluation of questions of rhetorical form. It is only careful literary culture that will save preaching from deterioration.

3. The preacher's responsibility as a professional man to the general public has by suggestion already been anticipated, but may well receive additional recognition. The culture of some professions does not find its best expression in public speech and the speaking professions vary in this regard. But the entire training of the preacher looks toward his function as a public speaker. He is properly assumed to represent preëminently the results of liberal culture, especially in the domain of speech. No audience will or should tolerate in the pulpit what is accepted in the courtroom, or in the legislative assembly, or on the platform or stump or even in the lecture room. It is the character of the vocation that exacts this superiority.

The relation of the pulpit to the press accentuates this professional responsibility. Oral utterance has been and still is a great power. Trained speech has done much of the world's best work. Its power seems somewhat lessened in our day. But its insignificance is not demonstrated. The press, powerful as it is, can never displace good public speech. The ultimate value of the press itself will depend upon the quality of public speech. The platform and the pulpit are behind the press. If these great popular forces should fail the press would sink into insignificance or degradation. The pulpit is still the sphere for most effective public address. It is still the throne of the church. Rhetorical and oratorical standards have changed. The old standards will not be recalled. But the need of effective speech in the pulpit has not changed.

As an educated man, the preacher is responsible for the preservation of the purity and power of his mother tongue. It is a sacred inheritance, and is a special charge for those whose vocation necessitates a constant use of it. The preacher deals with the loftiest ideal realities. The exaltation of his calling exacts upon the exaltation of his instruments.

Language is at its best in its association with religion. Religion should save it from degradation. A classic like our English Bible is a treasure to be guarded and worthily used. The tendency towards the corruption of language intensifies the responsibility. Many agencies are at work in this line. Mr. George P. Marsh* speaks of the connection between the debasement of national character and the debasement of language as illustrated by the French and Italian languages. In this country democratic life absorbs all degenerative influences, the influence of foreigners, of the ignorant classes, of commercial, political and industrial life, and of the vicious classes. The press is one of the sources of corruption in the use of language. Mr. Richard Grant White charges that we are suffering from newspaper English. Restless, ambitious, self-conceited, vulgar, mercenary, half-educated men, he charges, have to a large extent the handling of our public journals. It is less true today than when he wrote. But it is still measurably true. DeQuincy, in almost savage style, makes similar charges against the newspaper press of England. He charges that through this influence "an artificial dialect has come into play as the dialect of ordinary life." But it should be remembered that the press reflects to a considerable degree the habits and tastes of the general public. If the press is flippant and irreverent and artificial, it is an index of the character of the people that support it. If the people become flippant and unreal, its language can not preserve its dignity and strength and purity. The press has caught a certain tone of flippancy and vulgarity from a class of literary men misnamed realists. It appears in a droll, grotesque waggery miscalled humor. Responsible men should rescue language from such degradation. The pulpit is especially responsible to resist the tendency to vulgarize it.

* Lectures on the English Language X and XI.

II. Professional Factors in Rhetorical Form

1. The Common Factor. There must always be a common use of a language that is common. All professions use it in much the same way. All types of oratory have elements that are common. The speech of the English Parliament is much like that of the English pulpit. French pulpit oratory is strikingly like French deliberative or forensic oratory. French preachers have perhaps been more decisively influenced by the standards of secular rhetoric and oratory than those of any other nation. But we find something corresponding in this country. There is an American type of oratory. It is conditioned by the peculiarities of our national character and life, temperamental peculiarities, reading habits, influence of the public press, immaturity, freedom, bulkiness, lack of the habit of close discrimination, political and commercial life. The pulpit discloses its participation in what is common in our speech. It has certain elements of freedom, of idiomatic homeliness, of range and variety that are not so noticeable in the preaching of other countries. Modifications in theology and in the methods of preaching in different periods, in different sections of the country and in different religious communions have resulted in bringing American preaching to something approximating a common type. The study of rhetoric in our day, as well as the tendency towards ecclesiastical unification, is in the direction of what is common. Modern rhetoric is simple and unelaborate, it recognizes the fundamental principles that underlie all species of public utterance and regards them as substantially the same. The structure of a sermon is not generically different from that of a secular oration or address, and the same rhetorical qualities belong to each. This is to say that the laws of thought and of speech are much the same in all realms of speech. And thus in what is called elocution. We object to what is known as a pulpit

manner. It should conform to the ordinary standards of delivery. We have no sacred eloquence, no sacred gesture or posture, and no sacred rhetoric, although the name still lingers. And so of language. Its laws are the same for pulpit and platform. There is no sacred grammar. Or if there be, it is all sacred. Language is not a class product. It is a common possession. The fact that it is largely a conventional sign accentuates this fact that we must use it everywhere in much the same way. And yet we may correctly speak of a pulpit style.

2. There are specific professional elements of rhetorical form. The sermon as a rhetorical product differs somewhat from any form of so-called secular address. The difference is conditioned partly by the themes with which the preacher deals, by the object he has in view and by the relation of the personality of the speaker to both. The theme is distinctively ethical and religious according to a Christian type, and is something more and other than a product of the preacher's independent thinking. The secular address has no such limitation. The object is to secure a distinctively Christian result. Like all public speech, it seeks to persuade, but the object of the persuasion is different. It seeks the advancement of personal manhood and of the kingdom of God. The secular address seeks the earthly welfare of the individual and of the social body. The theme and the aim involve also a different sort of audience. In the one case it is a worshipping assembly. The chief interest is not the speaker, nor even the speech, but the worship. The speech is the instrument, the worship is the end, or rather the object of this worship is the end. In the other case we have an assembly whose prominent interest is largely in the speaker, and in his subject, but ultimately in the relation of both to some personal or social advantage. In the pulpit address, also, the relation of the speaker to his subject and his object is closer

than in the case of the secular address. In the former not only what is said and why it is said, but who says it is of far more importance than in the latter. The subject and the object exact more severely upon the organ of utterance. A close harmony between subject, object and agent is demanded. The preacher's supreme concern must be with the truth he brings, with the object he aims at, with himself as the organ of truth and with the condition of his hearers. It is not enough that he make the hearer believe that what he says is true, whether it be true or not. Nor is it enough that his truth be a mere opinion. He must bring what has been brought to him and that truth must have a validity of its own, independently of his own opinion, or his own skill in presenting it, and it must at the same time, be truth that commends itself to his own conscience and heart, and to the conscience and hearts of his hearers. It is not enough that he make the hearer believe that the object he seeks is a good one. His object must stand the test of Christian criticism. It must conform to the demands of Christ, in whose name he speaks. It is not enough that he make the hearer believe that he is a good man, he must be what he professes to be, and what his master and his cause require that he should be. Hence in pulpit speech the theme and the cause are far more dependent on the man than in secular speech.

Now all this will necessarily and inevitably have a modifying influence upon pulpit rhetoric all through. The theme, the object, the occasion, the associations, the audience condition a distinctive rhetorical product, and thus only does it become fit instrument to the accomplishment of the work in hand.

3. But how do the conditions of pulpit speech affect a modification in it as a rhetorical product and what will be its characteristics?

(1) They affect the preacher's vocabulary. Chris-

tianity has created and consecrated a type of speech fitted to the work of the pulpit. There is a Christian vocabulary. The ideas of Christianity are incarnate in words that express their innermost reality. In its use of the Greek language it put new significance into old words and consecrated them to new service. There is hardly an important word used that does not undergo modification. But it effects a like modification in any language in which it may be proclaimed. There is a Christian vocabulary of the English language. We consecrate certain words to a specifically Christian use. They do not often appear in secular oratory, and when they do appear there they are accommodated. Their use in the way of rhetorical accommodation and for political purposes, like the cross and the crown of thorns of a well-known political speech, seems semi-sacrilegious and we more than half suspect the tricks of the demagogue in the use. We have consecrated a vocabulary as we have the pulpit in which it is used. In the progress of Christian theology the number of these terms has greatly increased. Every profession has its own terminology. That of the preacher has its own and it can not get on without it. Words once technical have ceased to be so, and the number of such words is increasing. They have become the property of the pulpit and the congregation and they serve their best uses here, although they are freely used in the personal intercourses of the Christian life. There is a "language of Canaan." Christian people understand each other because they speak this language. The criticism of the Christian vocabulary of the pulpit, of which we hear much in our day, is irrational. If it were cant, the criticism would be valid. But there is no cant in the use of Christian terms that still have a meaning. If the meaning changes, the preacher has only to interpret the change. To deny himself the use of a term that is fairly well understood, or can be easily interpreted, were folly. Of

course terms that are strictly technical do not belong in the pulpit. It were worse than pedantry to use such terms. But there is a large Christian vocabulary that has ceased to be technical. The use of such a vocabulary, as illustrated by preachers like Mr. Spurgeon, greatly enriches preaching. What the preacher needs to do is to put fresh life into this vocabulary, not to commit it to the rubbish heap. The first thing Christianity does, when introduced to a pagan people, is to consecrate its language. The language must be consecrated before the people can be. And the power of Christianity to rescue language and consecrate it to holy uses is one of its marvels. It not only creates new words and consecrates old ones, but elevates the whole tone of language, and the possibilities of any language, as of any man, for enrichment are never fully realized till religion gets hold of it. It elevates the speech of common life. It gives us the "speech that is seasoned with salt." It operates so unconsciously that we hardly realize it. But its power in the pulpit is especially marked. The themes with which the preacher deals, and the tone which they produce, disclose their influence not only in vocabulary but in the entire character of speech.

(2) The conditions of the preacher's work influence the entire culture of the man and such culture is behind all the forms of his speech. Paul believed in a sort of verbal inspiration. The style in which the message is conveyed is appropriate to the character of the message. We need not press the term verbal inspiration, for it may be misleading. But it is perfectly evident that a preacher's culture will inevitably condition the character of his speech. Let us see how this may be.

(a) It may be done by influencing his mental powers. The great realities of religion quicken and expand the mental faculties. The mind itself is greatened that grapples with a

great religious theme. We see this even in ordinary men. No one ever comes to his best intellectually without the quickening of his religious manhood. Recall the testimony of Dr. Bushnell with respect to the influence of his religious awakening upon his mental powers and thus upon his literary style.* What quickens, strengthens, enlarges and dignifies the mind will disclose its results in one's speech. Such speech will have a weight, force, dignity and suggestiveness that were otherwise impossible.

(b) It may be done by influencing the imagination. The great realities of Christianity of themselves powerfully appeal to the imagination. They are supernatural realities. We must interpret the term supernatural, and it must have a greatly modified significance. But to deny its reality *in toto* is to deny Christianity itself. Without supernatural realities the imagination would never be adequately developed. The choicest products of Christianity have appeared in the sphere of the imagination. Supernatural Christianity is behind all best Christian art. Note its idealistic quality as contrasted with the realistic quality of Greek art. If the world were to lose its grasp of Christian supernaturalism civilization itself would suffer an irreparable loss. Not only the truths and facts of Christianity, but the forms in which they appear appeal to the imagination. They are themselves largely forms of the imagination. How mightily all this affects human speech! It is because of the influence of religion upon the imagination that pulpit speech becomes the noblest form of the art of speech. Nowhere beyond the Christian pulpit has human speech ever risen to such heights. No man can live in familiar contact with such lofty realities and with the forms in which they are embodied without catching something of their inspiration and reproducing them in the quality of his speech. The literary style of many great

* Life and Letters of Horace Bushnell, pages 199, note, and 207-210.

preachers has been modeled under this influence. Such preachers as Theodore Parker bear witness. A good pulpit style is product of the dignity, sobriety, rationality, imaginative symbolism and emotional fervor of the Christian revelation. It is a combination of the intellectual, the ethical, the emotional and imaginative elements of style. An excess of imaginative and emotional exuberance in pulpit speech is as foreign to a true method of interpreting Christianity as a corresponding exuberance in the architecture and decoration of our churches. A certain sobriety and chaste simplicity are demanded in the one as in the other case. The aim of religion is ethical and the imagination must always be the servant of the truth. But an imaginative style is a normal pulpit product.

The prophetic utterance was the best form of the speech of the early Christian church. It was a combination of the reflective, the imaginative and the emotional elements. And this is the best type for our day.

(c) It may be done, as has already been indicated, by influencing the emotions. Preaching is the work of a man who has a strong emotional interest in what he is doing. Religion stirs the strongest and purest emotions of the heart. But it is rational emotion. "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." It is not a normal influence of religion that stirs the feelings without touching the intelligence. The Pentecostal utterances of Christian speech were doubtless highly emotional. It was a natural expression of the new feelings that were stirring in the hearts of men. We find, however, a constant tendency to regulate emotion by reflection. The later and more approved utterance was in the form of the "word of wisdom," and "of knowledge." And, as already suggested, of prophecy. Thus preaching took a more reasonable and intelligent form, although with no complete suppression of emotion. That would have been

to "quench the spirit." Normal religious emotion is not independent of the imagination, for an imaginative utterance is an emotional utterance. But clear, correct vision steadies emotion. The ranter is not a normal product of the Christian pulpit. He is more distinctively a heathen product. The prophet who raves is not the Christian prophet. But neither on the other side is a one-sided intellectual type of speech the normal product of the Christian pulpit. The speech in which vision and judgment regulate feeling and in which feeling inspires insight and intelligence, the speech that is self-poised, yet earnest and earnest yet self-poised, is the normal Christian speech.

(d) It may be done by influencing the moral nature. The pulpit is a sphere for the training and culture of one's moral powers. The natural effect of preaching is the enrichment and ennobling of character. It not only presupposes that the preacher is, but it tends to make him, an earnest, sincere, consecrated man. And what affects character affects speech. "If a man would write in a noble style, let him first possess a noble soul," said Goethe. We may add: No such soul ever uttered itself in words that have wholly failed to suggest that nobility. A man's speech can not disguise his character for any considerable length of time. A base man can never handle a noble type of speech. Reverence, dignity, sincerity, benevolence, integrity, disclose themselves unconsciously and inevitably in the speech of a man whose vocation furnishes the best sphere for the culture of these qualities and who allows it to work its legitimate results. All the higher ethical qualities of style are naturally developed in the pulpit. Note for example the effect of a strong moral purpose upon energy of style. The man whose will is set strongly upon his task will speak with concentrated energy. A nerveless and ignoble type of speech is a perverted product of the Christian pulpit.

III. Methods of Rhetorical Culture

There is no ideal literary style, as there is no ideal preaching in general. Every preacher's rhetorical method should be his own. Which is to say that it should be natural. Style is a concrete reality, not an abstract conception. It is this quality of naturalness that should distinguish it. It is something, therefore, that can not be taught by rule, nor mechanically imitated. We speak of the born orator. We mean that back of all the training of such a man there is a reason, in his make up, why he speaks as he does and as well as he does, just as back of a man's physical and psychical training there is a reason in his physical and psychical constitution why he has his own facial expression and gait and manners. One in whom the native forces that are essential to good speech are strong we call a born orator. But within the limits of nature style may be cultivated. The born orator must become the trained orator. Good qualities may be bettered and bad ones overcome. The history of oratory shows what training may do. Richard Grant White says that John Bunyan's literary style could not have been bettered. But it was bettered. It is a great mistake to suppose that there can be anything approximating literary or rhetorical or oratorical perfection, without most laborious effort. Let us look at some of the conditions and methods of the rhetorical culture.

1. It is natural first of all to think of personal training and discipline. No man has a well-trained style in the fullest and best sense who is not himself a well-trained man. A speaker expresses not only himself in his style but the results of his culture. Personality is at its best and expresses itself at its best only when it is a well-developed and well-disciplined personality. Training from without is not enough. There must be training from within. It is a vital process. Without a free and vigorous handling from within of one's

powers rhetorical study and training are sure to result in an artificial and unreal product.

I touch here once more upon a sphere which previously we have frequently entered. But it may have new significance in its specific relation to the culture of rhetorical form. (1) Mental culture is necessary to rhetorical culture. A man's style is as his thought. But the thought is as the mind that produces it. The culture of rhetorical form is therefore primarily the culture of the mind that generates the thought which is the matter of the form. Three mental requirements are essential to good rhetorical form, and they are subject to indefinite culture, mental freedom, mental productiveness, mental order.

In our best and most effective utterances our mental faculties move freely. A hampered mind cannot express itself naturally, because not freely. The mind must be awakened from within. Recall the depressing effect of rhetorical criticism upon the mind when it is conscious of not being awake to seize and sift and appropriate the good of it. An excess of external criticism is likely to result in a slavish imitation. There comes a time in almost every man's mental history when he awakes to a new mental experience. It may come early in one's student life. It may come later. Often the experiences of practical life are necessary to awaken men from within. It may come suddenly as a sort of mental regeneration. Better were it if it came earlier. Happy the teacher who has the skill to awaken young men in student days from their slumbers. Happy the man who finds the teacher who can awaken him to a knowledge of himself and can quicken him into new mental life. But in student days most young men fail to understand themselves, fail to get at the secret of their strength, fail to know what work they can do best or how best to do it and fail to avail themselves to best advantage of the training to which they are subjected.

We ofter hear men say that they have in subsequent years been obliged to emancipate themselves from the rhetorical and homiletical training they have received in college and divinity schools. The explanation of all this is evident. Their training was too formal, too external and it became a fetter. It was the call of life that awakened them from within, and forced them to form new judgments of their already acquired knowledge. Then they began to work with freedom and facility and satisfaction. They are at last upon their feet. They have found themselves. Their methods of working seem more natural to them because their innermost powers have been awakened. They are emancipated from the tyranny of external rules, and they work unconsciously in line with inwardly regulative principles. Such consciousness of new freedom and power may be accompanied by too strong a reaction against former teaching and training. But their thraldom was partly their own fault. Ministers sometimes arraign the homiletic teaching and training to which they were subjected in the divinity school. There is likely to be a good deal of injustice in this. A large part of every man's early training will almost necessarily be of a somewhat formal, routine sort. A great amount of drudgery with small things is necessary to any man's equipment. We must do a great deal that seems useless and the result of which we cannot consciously appropriate at the time. It is a great mistake to suppose that all this is utterly useless and that time spent in such drudgery was wholly wasted. And yet there is a good deal of waste in all our educative processes, and largely for the reason that the student is not mentally awakened. It is only the thoroughly awakened mind that can make available to best uses the products of any kind of training. Impatience with most scrupulous, painstaking, toilful effort of any sort in one's rhetorical and homiletic training in years of preparation would be a great mistake.

But it would be a more serious mistake for one not to learn that he must find out how to use his training, whatever it may be, to best advantage. And it is greatly to be hoped that no young minister will be obliged to wait till he gets out into the work of life before he awakens to such knowledge of himself, his gifts, capacities and needs as will enable him to make useful unto the utmost whatever training he may get in earlier years. Whatever, then, at any time awakens the mind to freedom of action and to the concentration of its forces tends to the production of those qualities of style that are necessary to effectiveness in the pulpit. Such awakenings often result in a sudden and marked change in one's rhetorical style. Changes in the style of the preaching of Chalmers, Robertson and Bushnell are classic illustrations. We see something like this on a large scale in the revival of a national literature. An awakening of the national mind emancipates literature from its formal, imitative and lifeless character, and makes it a new power among the people. An age of literary pedantry gives place to an age of creative activity.

Mental fulness and productiveness are a condition of good literary form. The fuller one is of his subject, the better, other conditions being given, will he express himself. Of course men differ greatly in this matter. A man like Henry Ward Beecher speaks with an ease, an affluence and a naturalness because of his enormous intellectual productiveness, that were impossible for the ordinary preacher. But any man of fair equipment may enlarge his mental resources, and increase his producing power till he shall find increasing facility of expression. We are told that the mind should never be forced. Thought that has value will come freely. But thought that is laboriously produced may win for itself at last a free and easy expression, as the style of men noted as hard workers demonstrates. A mind that is not over-

worked and jaded should be whipped into vigorous action. One is not fully himself who is not the master of his mental resources. An indolent habit of mind means a weak, confused, unimpressive habit of utterance. A desultory habit limits mental energy and productiveness, and so power of expression. The mind should be held steadily and concentratedly to its task. Mental concentration means mental vigor.

Mental training by conditioning orderly thought also becomes tributary to rhetorical form. Orderly thought means clear expression. Perspicacity is back of perspicuity. It means also naturalness of expression, for there are no gaps or unbridged gulfs of thought into which the mind plunges and from which it must extricate itself by a blind struggle that contorts rhetorical expression. It means also forceful utterance, for thought that is held strictly and firmly will express itself with a vigor corresponding. The force of mental momentum imparts itself to the style of speech. As thought kindles in its orderly movement, speech glows correspondingly. Mental disorder is mental paralysis. A mob is never in good fighting trim.

(2) Moral culture is necessary to the best rhetorical culture. The aims and purposes of a man's life inevitably affect his speech. What lifts one's moral and religious nature elevates and ennobles his utterance. It may do it consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, largely unconsciously and indirectly. Moral purpose is essential to effective preaching. No true preacher can be indifferent as to results. The best preachers are students of methods of effectiveness on moral grounds. To produce and arrange thought is not the whole problem. A man's way of putting his thought is an important matter, and the man who makes a successful study of this needs behind it all a direct, strong moral purpose. People are ready for the man who speaks with a pur-

pose and who, therefore, speaks effectively. The rhetorician and the elocutionist may be dangerous teachers for the man who subjects himself to them without putting strong moral purpose into his work. A habit of moral earnestness may be tributary to clearness of utterance. It knows itself as responsible to be intelligible. Important interests demand it. The man who honors the truth and loves his fellowmen will wish to get his message clearly before those who wait upon his ministry. It is associated with that quality we call fervor, a species of which is unction, one of the qualities of energetic utterance. It will be real, not professional emotion. It will not be a hothouse exuberance of fancy, but it will give imagination good range. Exactness of statement may be a rhetorical virtue in the preacher. But the speech of a man who is in dead earnest is not likely to be so severely, so coldly exact as to be ineffective. Such speech is remote from the ordinary audience, because defective in emotional warmth and in moral cogency. It would discredit a certain largeness and suggestiveness which the use of the imagination and feelings impart to preaching. There are preachers that seem to be afraid of their emotions and of their imaginations. They are afraid to let themselves out in a large and suggestive way. They whip their thoughts soundly in order to make them humble and tame. They shave them down to the bone, so that no fleshly bloom is left upon them. They get rid of all sail and all steam and they run their homiletic craft under the bare poles. A strong moral purpose will save a man from such ineffectiveness. It will save him on the other hand from the exaggerations of the sensationalist or the emptiness of the vendor of cant. It will produce a genuinely earnest type of speech that is fervid without extravagance or cant or without intellectual priggishness or ethical diletantism.

And such speech will have moral pungency. No display

here, no self-consciousness. It is straight speech. The form catches the reality, the vitality, of thought, feeling and purpose that lie behind. Frederick Robertson was a preacher of this sort.

Sincerity and sobriety also are qualities inseparable from such speech. A preacher must be forcible, but he is responsible for the sobriety of his statements. Insincerity and extravagances were the vices of classical rhetoric that brought it into disfavor with the Christian church. A genuinely earnest man will not strain after emotional effects. Flippancy is out of place in the pulpit. Men like Dean Swift and Robert South were deficient in genuine moral earnestness and sincerity. Some of the old Puritan preachers even were deficient in this matter.

2. I suggest secondly study of the properties of good pulpit style. One must know what such a style is, must have some standard wherewith to test it. Knowledge of a rhetorical defect presupposes knowledge of what discloses it as a defect and knowledge of a rhetorical virtue presupposes knowledge of what vindicates it as such. A preacher should know his rhetorical defects and should be intolerant of them. It is easy to slip into faulty habits of speech. In the pressure of modern life it is difficult to maintain a high rhetorical standard. It is well for a preacher, especially in the early period of his professional life while his rhetorical habits are forming, to pause in his work and raise practical concrete questions: Does what I am now saying express just what I mean, or is it ambiguous? If I express myself in this way, will my hearers, at any rate most of them, but better all of them, understand me or understand me correctly? It is clear enough to me, but is it proportionately clear to them? Are they familiar with this terminology which is so clear to me? Will they readily get the meaning of this sentence, which is clear enough to me? Is it necessary to explain

terms that express fine distinctions in thought? Is it necessary to reconstruct this sentence in order to straighten it out into simplicity and perspicuity? Shall I satisfy or offend the tastes of my hearers, or shall I meet the claims of my own profession upon me as an educated man or the exactions of my own best taste and judgment, if I indulge myself in such and such forms of expression? Am I succeeding in making a sufficiently strong expression in my use of terms or in the structure of my sentences? In such forms of expression am I conscious of an unnatural effort or is it strictly normal? Is my vocabulary or the architecture of my sentences strict idiomatic English? It is well to raise these questions not infrequently. It all means, of course, has my pulpit style the qualities of exactness, clearness, elegance, force, naturalness and purity that are necessary to secure the best results of preaching? It involves a study of the laws of language as related to these properties. These laws have been investigated, registered and formulated in the science of rhetoric. To come then to the science of rhetoric for the knowledge of a good style is to come to the formulated results of observation and experience. It is to come to the standards of intelligence and good taste. And this is valid for all types of speech, all occasions, all themes, all speakers. But a good pulpit style must meet specific as well as general demands. Generic qualities must adapt themselves to specific wants. Different themes call for and naturally secure different rhetorical forms. A style that speaks prevailingly to the understanding will differ essentially from one that speaks chiefly to the feelings and imagination. A man who treats his subject argumentatively will speak differently from one who presents it illustratively. The evangelistic sermon will have a different rhetorical style from the doctrinal or ethical sermon. The character of the audience also is involved. What might be perfectly clear to one audience would be

obscure to another. What might strike one audience as rude and vulgar would impress another as simply strong and manly. What might captivate one would offend another. Even the size of the audience may well be considered. A small audience, especially of plain people, need plain speech. An elaborate or elevated style of speaking to a small audience and on ordinary occasions would not be fitting, it would not be in good rhetorical form. Rhetorical form has relation, moreover, to the condition of the preacher. No man always preaches in just the same way. Style varies with subjective conditions and external influences. It varies in the same discourse. Extemporaneous preachers especially disclose a considerable range of variety in their pulpit style. They frequently deliberately break up their style and shoot suddenly down from the elevated to the homely and colloquial method of speech. They are also unconsciously exposed to a great variety of unforeseen influences that break in upon their speech and that often secures a momentary freshness and pungency and power. Some of these influences are beyond the reach of investigation. But many of them are subjects of study and he who could be a master of assemblies will investigate them.

3. I suggest thirdly the study of models. Homiletic style like homiletic structure is best studied in its concrete products. And in the study of the one as of the other three methods are essential. (1) The process of analytic investigation is one method. The verbal and grammatical elements of a preacher's product or of any literary product are important. Words and sentences can not convey all there is in a man's style. They may suggest more than they themselves contain. But style is largely a matter of vocabulary and syntax. Emerson was a student of the verbal and grammatical elements of English. His chaste and wealthy vocabulary is product of minute, painstaking study of words.

It was this sort of study that Dr. Johnson had in mind when he advised students to give their days and nights to Addison. Orators have studied in this manner. Demosthenes studied Thucydides with reference to the vocabulary, and the order and the rhythm of the sentences. There is a choice and order of words that result in different qualities of style. All artists have been analytical students of their art. The experimental sketches of different parts of the human body which one sees in the studio of Michael Angelo at Florence indicate the artist's knowledge of anatomy. His statue of Moses shows his genius for powerful effects in statuary, but behind it stands most careful and painstaking and minute analysis of anatomical structure. A public speaker, even though he be what we call a born orator, will never be the master of his art without study of the elements of his art. Mere familiarity with the impressions that come from a literary product will not bring an adequate knowledge of the sources of the impressions. The one who merely absorbs impressions can give no rational account of them to himself or to others. An analytical examination of vocabulary, syntax, figures of speech, qualities of style, different species of composition, will be of value to the preacher long after the preparatory period of study. Ordinary reading can not be a substitute for such examination. To read an author is not to study him.

(2) The process of unconscious absorption, however, is another method. Much that is best in a man's literary style is caught by what we call the literary sense. There is an unnamable quality that seems to lie back of a man's language. It belongs to the man and language while it hints at it, does not wholly interpret it. We get at it in a half-conscious way by familiarity with it, just as by familiarity with our friends and without much conscious reflection or critical analysis, we detect in a thousand little manifestations what lies behind

their faces and forms in their characters, just as in our observation of a landscape scene we take in unconsciously and unreflectively a multitude of things that enter into the sum total of our impressions. In Italy and Germany uneducated people are in constant contact with the best products of painting, sculpture and music, and they are often better art critics than educated people in this country. We are obliged to go abroad for the study not only of art principles but art products. No American needs to go abroad to study rhetoric and oratory. What we need, however, in this country is a better use of the English language in common life. One who lives in a good literary atmosphere unconsciously forms correct habits of speech and a correct literary taste. Literary sense is largely the product of unconscious influence. Richard Grant White traced his literary tastes and his use of the English language to the atmosphere of the school in which he fitted for college, to the influence of his teachers and school fellows in their use of English and to his study of English classics. We can readily trace the influence of the English training-schools for boys, like Rugby and Eton, upon the speech of the public men of England. An idiomatic and energetic English style may be fostered by habitual intercourse with the so-called common people, especially those of native vigor of mind. The average, every-day sort of man is accustomed to say what he means in a simple, straight and forceful manner. But if one would cultivate a refined use of language he will cultivate the society of those who speak and write the better type of English. The influence of the written literary product is great, but the influence of the oral product is greater. And yet absorption of the written product is a large part of a preacher's literary culture, and especially of the best poets. (3) Practice in writing connected with study is essential. Thus only can the results of study be utilized to best advan-

tage. The objects of our own investigation or of our intellectual commerce are of chief value in calling out and directing our own activities. If they supersede our own activities their influence is harmful.

With regard to practice, the following suggestions may be made. With most of them all students of English are familiar and they have found them of practical value:

The practice of examining specimens of English that are defective with respect to the essential properties of style, *e. g.*, purity, exactness, clearness, elegance, force, etc., in order to find out just where the defect lies or in what it consists and then making the effort to correct the defect. The practice of absorbing or memorizing the substance of the thought of some writer noted for excellence of style, some preacher by preference, and then incorporating it in one's own language, and comparing the result. One sees by comparison where one's defect lies. One thus tests himself by his model. Having the example immediately before one he may in a free way avail himself of what it can do for him. It is not done mechanically.

The practice of translating poetry into prose. This familiarizes one with poetic diction and at the same time enables one to turn it into its proper prose equivalent. A purely poetic diction would be offensive in the pulpit. Yet the semi-poetic or a prose-poetic diction is desirable in preaching. The practice of turning poetry into prose is an aid in the culture of such diction. This is the more important in the early years of professional study. The scientific habit of mind or the habit of mental abstraction leads to the cultivation of an abstruse and non-poetic diction.

The practice of translating from foreign languages. Such practice habituates one to careful observation of the peculiarities, either the excellencies or the possible defects of any classic, in order to get not only the meaning but the

spirit of it. Careful observation of delicate shades of meaning is essential to this. Such practice with a dead language is more valuable than with a living language, because it is more difficult. It is more difficult because the objects which the words represent are for the most part no longer in existence. We are obliged, therefore, to exercise the imagination more largely, and it is such exercise that is of great value in the study of language. Such practice also enriches one's vocabulary. To reproduce fine shadings of thought taxes vocabulary. It necessitates careful discrimination and it is discrimination that enlarges vocabulary. It cultivates ingenuity in the effort to overcome the difficulty of rendering in idiomatic English what appears in a wholly foreign idiom. Orators have been accustomed to this practice for the purpose of mastering such difficulties and of enriching their vocabulary.

Careful independent practice in writing. There are but few, I imagine, who attain to a good use of English who have not at some time habituated themselves to the composing of each sentence of a written product carefully in the mind, and to the uttering of it audibly before it is written down. It may be of value to vocalize it vigorously before it is written. At any rate it is not well to write the sentence until it is clearly conceived and distinctly uttered. This will be slow work, but it will pay in the end. One who is willing to begin with care can afford to leave the question of facility and rapidity to the future. They will come in due course. Better spend a few months or even years in careful painstaking with the certainty of ultimate facility of excellence, than begin with a careless habit with the certainty of a facility of hopeless imperfection.

This last suggestion may need some limitation. Corrections should not quench vitality. One should therefore, compose in such way as will secure this. Proper care, how-

ever, does not devitalize style. We do not find that any of the great writers, who have, as we know, patiently and toilfully elaborated their English, have worked the life out of it. But in the flow and fervor of production it may be difficult to secure the perfection of form one would desire, without losing something of the freshness that is so necessary to effectiveness. One may be so wrought up that it may be difficult to combine critical severity with emotional freedom. In such case it may sometimes be best to run off one's work at a single sitting. The work can be corrected, and often best corrected after it has been for a little time laid aside. In this way vitality may be protected and defects corrected. One's best work, even with respect to literary form, is often done under high pressure and with great rapidity. Sermons written in such moments of exalted enthusiasm will hardly need much change. Still one will wish to avail himself of an hour of cool reflection in order to look up faults. But if one can compose in the careful way above suggested and at the same time keep the flow and flush and vigor essential to effectiveness, he will best do so.

Writing in a tentative way is often necessary in order to limber up the mind and get it into free action. It may take time to get well started. The mind needs plenty of rope. It is well to let it have its own way for a while, till it begins to show that it is ready to begin work in good earnest. When that moment comes one will throw the product into the waste-paper basket and start anew. All this is simply to say that in the right cultivation of rhetorical form it is necessary to get the mind into free action, for one's true style is an utterance of the mind when it works with least restraint.

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